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CIS Heads of State Hold Summit Near Minsk

Uzbekistan's Karimov Arrives

LD1604173693 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1522 GMT 16 Apr 93

[By BELINFORM for TASS]

[Text] Minsk April 16 TASS—"Uzbekistan has always supported the Commonwealth and considered it to be the most civilized way to continue relations between former Soviet republics," Uzbek President Islam Karimov told correspondents at the Minsk airport today.

"However, the Commonwealth as it, after adopting over 270 inefficient documents, is not acceptable for us. We want the CIS to work; the aim of today's meeting is to elaborate a mechanism to enable the implementation of documents, which have been adopted," said Karimov.

In his opinion, "Russian developments call in question the existence of both Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States". Karimov supported Russian reforms with some reservations, and said "there is no alternative to Yeltsin. Today I will voice support to Yeltsin on my part and on the part of Uzbekistan," he said.

Moldova's Snegur Arrives

AU1804154093 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1717 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Minsk BASAPRESS, 16/4/1993—The Press Department of the President reports that today, Mircea Snegur, the President of Moldova arrived by air to the capital of the Republic of Belarus, where he will participate in the important meeting between the Heads of the States of the CIS.

At the airport of Minsk Snegur was met by Stanislav Sushkevich, the President of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarus and by the Prime Minister of this state Vyacheslav Kebich. After his arrival, the President of Moldova declared to journalists that the meeting of this kind was imperative because economical relations between states are deteriorating and in this situation no state can overcome the crisis alone. "From this meeting I expect special determination behind perspectives for economic collaboration between those states," stressed Snegur. Being asked to expand upon measures concerning collective security, Snegur indicated that Moldova, like Ukraine, is creating its own National Army and would not participate in the talks concerning this problem. The participants of the meeting in Minsk will examine the intentions of President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, and the President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin, which are based on consolidating the CIS.

The session devoted to this problem started at 1500 [1100 GMT]. After the session there are plans to continue the next meeting with an enlarged participation. The special meeting of the heads of the states-members of CIS will end with a press conference.

Yeltsin, Kravchuk, Ter-Petrosyan Arrive

OW1604173393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1723 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On his arrival in Minsk Russian President Boris Yeltsin declared that this emergency summit of CIS heads of states held in the Belarusian capital is an unusual one. The presidents, he said, "decided to speak about further improvement of cooperation. All are striving for more integrated contacts. The question concerns a wide integration both in foreign policy and economy."

Responding to journalists, Yeltsin pointed out that the G-7 conference of the Foreign and Finance Ministers held in Tokyo voiced a statement that the principle to count votes at the referendum, which had been determined by the Congress of the Russian People's Deputies, is "an absolute nonsense" in the world practice. "That is why we shall act in accordance with the world practice," emphasized the Russian President.

He pointed out that there is no intentional connection between the meeting in Tokyo and the nation wide referendum. In Yeltsin's words, "it was difficult to determine time acceptable for everybody and at last it has appeared."

Ukraine stood and stands for effective work of the Commonwealth, the Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk declared at Minsk airport. In Kravchuk's words, implementation of agreements reached earlier in the framework of the CIS was postponed every now and then because all leaders of states were busy with urgent problems of their own countries. "Either we shall work effectively or we shall stop to deceive the people," Kravchuk said.

The president also declared that "everybody, who wishes, is disintegrating the CIS, but Ukraine." He explained the necessity of this summit in Minsk by the fact that due to the collapse of economic ties enterprises in all CIS republics are stopping their work. He stressed the necessity to urgently solve CIS economic problems.

According to Kravchuk, a system of collective security within the CIS cannot be effective without any connection with the European and world structures. Regional problems, he said, are too often connected with world problems.

In Kravchuk's words, the transfer of the summit from Yerevan to Minsk is caused by the fact that holding of a summit in one of the capitals of "the warring states" would mean support one of the conflicting parties on the part of the Commonwealth.

Commenting Ukraine's position with respect to the Black Sea Fleet, Kravchuk indicated that Kiev has not violated the Yalta agreements on the Black Sea Fleet.

However, there have appeared several new issues, in particular, the issues on the fleet's division. He believes that this problem can be solved only by Presidents of two countries. Kravchuk declared that he would present corresponding proposals to solve the Black Sea Fleet's problems at the summit in Minsk.

In response to the question concerning the trial of 1991 coup leaders started in Moscow, the Ukrainian President pointed out that as Russia is a legal successor of the USSR, the accused are citizens of Russia and he believes that Russia can and must conduct a just trial. "As Ukraine's citizen, I am looking at this event with great interest. I would like that the court would justly solve the case."

At Minsk airport the Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan expressed his opinion that the solution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict should be conducted in two stages. The first stage should ensure entire cessation of fire and security of the population in Nagorno-Karabakh. During the second stage the parties should discuss all legal issues, primarily, the status of Karabakh.

"We all want to see the CIS as an acting mechanism," the Armenian President underlined. It's a pity but at present we fail to ensure this, he believes. That is why the Minsk summit will discuss the state and fate of the Commonwealth.

Nazarbayev Comments on Arrival

OW1604175293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1726 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Friday [16 April], Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev arrived in Minsk for the CIS summit. He told journalists in the airport that he favored stronger cooperation within the CIS. "We have a common destiny and must respect each other. Isolated, we shall not be able to get over the crisis," he said.

Nazarbayev believes that "Russia can't do without other states, just as other states can't do without Russia". Economic contacts and a common market are indispensable for all, said Nazarbayev. "If the states maintain solid economic relations, they will easily solve all of the ethnic and inter-state problems" he stated.

Meeting Opens; Objectives Viewed

OW1604154493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1530 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Report by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The meeting of CIS heads of states started in Zaslavl near Minsk at 3:00 P.M. local time (4:00 P.M. Moscow time). The meeting is being attended by the top executives of eight CIS member nations. (President Askar Akayev of Kyrgyzstan has to stay in Bishkek to attend parliament and President Saparmurad Niyazov of Turkmenistan remained in Ashgabat for health reasons—IF [INTERFAX]).

As Presidential Bulletin is going to press, the CIS leaders have been continuing the discussion of the sole item on the summit agenda-ways to consolidate the Commonwealth. This formulation was suggested by the presidents of Russia and Kazakhstan.

Observers note of the differences the objectives of the summit between the CIS heads of state. In particular, at a recent news conference in Kiev President Leonid Kravchuk of Ukraine showed interest in discussing a range of issues in economic cooperation. To the best of Interfax's knowledge, Mircea Snegur of Moldova shares this approach. Before flying to Minsk he also said he would prefer the meeting to be strictly confidential.

Stanislav Shushkevich, the head of Belarusian parliament, told Interfax that the summit was essential because more effective procedures in economic cooperation within the CIS framework were urgently needed. In his view, a strategic analysis of the reform course and a mutually beneficial coordination of activities were top priorities.

Sources close to President Nursultan Nazarbayev's headquarters say that Alma-Ata is prepared to make specific proposals at the summit on setting up a customs union and on guidelines for free trade between constituent parts of the former Soviet Union.

Armenia will continue to press for the setting up of agencies which would promote integrational processes within the Commonwealth, Interfax was told by the press secretary of President Levon Ter-Petrosyan. Aram Abramyan emphasized that a breach of commitments would result in inevitable retribution which should not, however, amount to an infringement of national sovereignties.

As in earlier meetings of the Council of Heads of States, the Tajik delegation wants to attract attention to the situation on the southern borders of the CIS. (Because large groups of opposition gunmen are trying on an increasing scale to penetrate the border, the country's leaders are expected to insist that the January agreement between Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan should be honored in full).

President Boris Yeltsin of Russia believes that the Minsk summit will be largely political. He said that the summit had to answer the questions to what extent can agreement be reached, how far can the integration process go, in what way will the integration be implemented, and, generally, who is agreeable to integration.

Uzbekistan's Islam Karimov feels that the choice is more straightforward. "The CIS will either exists on the principles formulated in its Charter or it will go down into history as simply a post Soviet USSR stage." In his words, Russia, which "is now immersed in its own problems and does not want to be bothered with ours" will have the decisive say in the matter.

Turkmenistan's Saparmurad Niyazov, who is not attending the summit, said on its eve: "The summit will discuss support for Russian reforms and decide whether the CIS should perform coordinatory or advisory functions." "We should see to it that the CIS decisions and advice are implemented. If, however, the Council of Heads of States splits, its decisions can hardly be expected to be followed up."

Observers doubt that the summit can lead to a definitive outcome, even less so to a "split." Still, they expect sharp controversy on implementation of earlier decisions in the economic field and on the need to replace a purely advisory Working Group by a more powerful decision-making body. The heads of the seven states that have signed the Commonwealth Charter (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) must determine the guidelines for relations between these states and those which have not (Ukraine, Moldova, and Turkmenistan) and with the republics of the former USSR which did not join the Commonwealth.

The coordinator of the Working Group of the CIS Council of Heads of States and the Council of Heads of Governments, Ivan Korotchenya, told Interfax that thus far only those accords between CIS member states that "promote the sovereignty of the independent states and autonomy from the center" had been implemented, while documents "which lead to the opposite effect, integration and subordination to a unified center" were not easily put into effect.

Korotchenya was confident that for the documents that republican leaders sign to be effective, support from law-makers of the CIS member states must be secured. "An interparliamentary assembly may help to make legal the decisions that the heads of states and governments make," he emphasized.

IF Note: Simultaneously with the Minsk summit, the Council of the Interparliamentary Assembly (IPA) met in St. Petersburg under the chairmanship of Ruslan Khasbulatov, Speaker of the Russian Supreme Soviet. The meeting discussed the ratification of treaties and accords concluded by CIS heads of states and heads of governments. Unlike preceding meetings this one was attended by a delegation from Ukraine which is not an IPA member. The delegation was headed by Vasiliy Durdynets, Deputy Chairman of the Ukrainian parliament. In St. Petersburg Khasbulatov was again critical of the Councils of Heads of States and Heads of Governments whose decisions were not carried out and whose documents were carelessly worded.

Observers expect the leaders of CIS member nations to succeed in tackling one quite specific issue, namely approving the appointment of Belarus's Justice Minister Leonid Dashuk to chairmanship of the CIS Economic Court. Originally his nomination was expected to be confirmed at the ordinary summit scheduled to be held in Yerevan April 30. Now, however, that meeting is very likely to canceled or its venue changed. Observers who say so recall recent remarks made by the presidents of Russia and Ukraine. In particular, Kravchuk thinks that by meeting in Yerevan the leaders of CIS member states would support one side in the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict which has heightened lately.

Yeltsin Wants Support for Reform

OW1604181393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1727 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Reliable sources close to negotiating parties of the Minsk summit of CIS member states told Interfax that President Boris Yeltsin of Russia had called on the summit participants to uphold the Russian reform and his own position on the Russian events.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan has reportedly asked his counterparts from other CIS member nations to make up their minds whether they support the setting up of an economic union and whether the opting out of the CIS can be allowed.

The meeting of the heads of CIS states without their aides in Zaslavl near Minsk took much longer than expected. In the lobby the word spread that significant differences had emerged on the future structure of the Commonwealth. This is borne out by the fact that no journalists with one exception of a TV reporter have been allowed into the building where the heads of state were to move. Russia's Boris Yeltsin and Kazakhstan's Nursultan Nazarbayev are expected to make statements within an hour.

Yeltsin Address

LD1604204593 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1740 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Address by Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin to representatives at the CIS heads of states summit in Minsk on 16 April—recorded]

[Text] In various political circles, and indeed, in the mass media, they have started speculating of late that the CIS is not capable of resolving any issues at all and almost that the CIS is moving toward disintegration. Of course, this is wrong; therefore, all we heads of state agreed to meet and generally to map out further steps to strengthen the Commonwealth of Independent States. In addition, we have agreed to meet in May in order to make specific decisions relating to the measures already drawn up. The matters facing the CIS now are posed by life itself and the well-being of our peoples depends to a large degree on these matters being resolved. During last year we gradually realized that it is at least not practical to regard the CIS merely as a mechanism for a civilized divorce. The euphoria of standing apart and shutting oneself off as states is passing; the striving for restoration and development of economic and political cooperation is being displayed more and more strongly. This is not surprising either. Our states are choosing their path of development independently without any force or pressure from outside.

The formation of the Commonwealth did not cause a single conflict between the former Union republics. On the contrary, over the past year, we have acquired our first experience in peace-making actions on how to put an end to shooting and bloodshed and how to stabilize the situation. Proceeding along the path of strengthening their independence, our peoples are not losing common sense and are maintaining kind feelings toward each other. There is no need to prove today that the CIS countries are united in many more ways than they are divided. The objective community of interests is the basis for this. At our previous meeting, we all unanimously spoke in favor of improving the effectiveness of the work of the CIS. Seven participants of the CIS adopted the Charter of the Commonwealth. Yesterday, the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet ratified the Charter practically unanimously. The main thing today is to give new impetus to the development of the Commonwealth. Its childhood is over, the time has come for it to stand firmly on its own feet.

First, the time has come for the Commonwealth to form an opinion of its own in world politics. We believe that the formation of a common position with regard to key international problems is both possible and necessary. Why not adopt the practice of putting forward joint initiatives on foreign policy? We can start with issues which are in the interests of all. For example, joint actions on key issues of world politics like preventing weapons of mass destruction and means of delivering them, strengthening international stability, settling regional conflicts, protecting the environment, fighting against terrorism and illegal drug trafficking, as well as putting forward a joint proposal of the Commonwealth members to set up CSCE peace-keeping forces. Another possibility is organizing top-level meetings—for instance, of the Commonwealth foreign ministers with representatives of influential international organizations, such as the European Community, the Council of Europe, ASEAN, and some others.

Second, the key to resolving socio-political issues confronting our countries lies in the economic sphere. The time has come—and I think I shall voice a general opinion by saying this, we have arrived at the same opinion today—to clear away most resolutely all obstacles on the way toward a mutually advantageous economic cooperation. The main thing is to establish direct and, more important still, free links between enterprises, producers, and consumers of goods, and their direct interaction. I have just returned from the congress of industrialists and entrepreneurs, in which about 5,000 people took part, and they instructed me to tell heads of state here that without developing further cooperation the market and the reform will of course progress with great difficulties. A tendency toward forming mutually advantageous unions whose members share the same interests, toward creating various transnational corporations and associations in industry and agriculture, power engineering, transport communications and in the service sphere is gaining momentum. The task now is to support these trends in an active and concerted manner, and then we can be sure of success.

Third, we need like air a multilateral coordination in the development of individual key industries in the national economy. The Commonwealth already has certain experience of this kind. The CIS electric and power engineering council has been set up. Already operating are a railway transport council, an inter-state space council, a regional commonwealth in the field of communication, and a number of others. Agreements on the inter-state oil and gas council signed in Surgut have a considerable potential. Essentially, we are moving toward industrial cooperation in this sphere, including capital construction, an effective use of oil and gas pipelines, scientific and technical matters, etc.

Fourth, the necessity of cooperation on investment is becoming more obvious every day, inter alia to guarantee the development of deposits in Western Siberia, on Sakhalin, on the Barents Sea shelf, and others. We can notice or not notice these processes, we can hinder them or assist them. But irrespective of our will they will develop. The development of integration requires a free trade, without customs barriers, movement of goods, services, capitals and labor resources, an availability of a single monetary system, an establishment of a more or less uniform legal climate on the basis of which enterprises and all sorts of entrepreneurs' structures can work, a working-out of a common economic policy or at least its main elements. Creating a single economic space and a common market envisages that the CIS countries should set up an economic union on the basis of a customs and currency union.

The customs union will make it possible to remove customs restrictions of any kind between countries which have entered into it, and to introduce a single customs rate along the outer perimeter. The difference in price levels will disappear, and the uncontrollable speculative channelling of goods across today's transparent borders will cease.

A few words about currency union. The ruble zone has effectively disintegrated. The ruble of the old Union is no more. The use of the Russian ruble as a common monetary unit does not, for various reasons, meet with understanding from everyone. As we know, considerable difficulties are arising with the introduction of national currencies. We have already put forward our proposals to introduce relevant draft agreements on a single system. Russia is ready to continue with talks on this issue. But in the end we have to decide between either demarcating and creating our own monetary systems, or integrating. There is no third option: preserving the present situation would be dangerous for the economies of the Commonwealth countries.

It is clear that to tackle the range of economic issues we need to create a special committee, a permanent working body with appropriate powers. I am sure we have every possibility of turning the Commonwealth into an effective inter-state association capable of coordinating interests and uniting efforts in the cause of economic progress.

Strengthening cooperation in the military-political sphere seems to be topical. An effective system of collective security is probably not possible without forming a defense union, although not everyone agrees with this. A treaty on collective security can become the core of this system. It is important that the treaty come into force and the organizational structures envisaged by it be created in the shortest possible time.

It is worthwhile to think about establishing a mechanism for its implementation which would take into consideration the possibility of the CIS countries who have not signed the treaty joining it. We should also clearly define the role of the chief command in the organizational structure of the military-political leadership of the joint armed forces of the treaty member-states. The possibility of setting up joint armed forces in the future, perhaps, with the participation of some states under a single coalition command, should not be ruled out.

The development of events inside the CIS and on its borders is demanding more and more urgently that there should be joint peacekeeping actions. To regulate and prevent armed conflicts, a set of concrete collective measures should be drawn up within the CIS framework and appropriate mechanisms should be set up, including by using the possibilities and experience of the United Nations and CSCE.

Russian is prepared to take part in peacekeeping actions, but of course it cannot bear the burden of responsibility, both moral and financial, single-handedly. In this connection, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that similar accords, to put it mildly, are not always fulfilled.

In order for the Commonwealth fully to live up to its name and fulfill its purpose, it is necessary to ensure strict observance of human rights in all the CIS states. An analysis of local conflicts in the countries of the Commonwealth leads one to the conclusion that in practically all of them the primary cause has been violations of human rights or the rights of national minorities. This is of course a very difficult and delicate problem for our Commonwealth. But I am convinced that there would be no friction or conflict caused by this factor if all members of the CIS strictly observed internationally recognized standards in the field of human rights and freedoms. So we call on all our partners to accede to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and UN pacts on human rights as soon as possible.

We believe that one of the priority areas for the implementation of the CIS Charter is to ensure that a commission on human rights is established and starts work as soon as possible. We also propose that a regional convention to protect persons belonging to national minorities be concluded.

Esteemed council members, it is obvious to Russia that the Commonwealth ought to become an effective interstate association, whose members play a real part in various forms of cooperation and bear their portion of responsibility. Such logic leaves no room for living at others' expense or attempts to derive one-sided advantage at the expense of others. At the same time, it completely rules out the notorious habit of encouraging disciplined partners and punishing the negligent ones. The charter of the Commonwealth of Independent States is essentially aimed at this. The principle of it is simple and comprehensible—equal rights, equal obligations, equal advantages and benefits.

Let's call a spade a spade. He who does not sign the charter will in effect remain outside the main channel of cooperation within the framework of the Commonwealth, with all the consequences that stem from that. It is possible that these countries are placing emphasis on developing bilateral relations. They will find an honest and reliable partner in Russia, with whom they can cooperate on the basis of generally accepted norms of international law. The choice is open to each state.

Participants in the CIS interested in deepening cooperation for joint settlement of economic and other problems could conclude an agreement within the framework of the CIS, of course, after it had been prepared, possibly in May. The signing of agreements of this kind does not mean resuscitating the unified state or returning to the former Union bodies of authority and management. Participants in the conference, in the agreement, retain their independence and the sovereign rights of each. We are talking about giving our relations new momentum and multiplying our forces to tackle everyday problems. We have talked about and discussed many of these issues today, when only heads of state were at the first part of the sitting. Thank you all for your attention.

Nazarbayev Statement at News Conference

LD1704082893 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1756 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Statement by Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev at a news conference of CIS heads of state in Minsk on 16 April—recorded]

[Text] Esteemed ladies and gentlemen, esteemed representatives of the mass media: I imagine how impatiently and tensely you are awaiting the results of our meeting. It is really very extraordinary that there were few who suspected it a week ago. Although I would say that it is very timely—a meeting that was achieved through long suffering, yet was quite usual. It has been waiting its turn for a long time, and the peoples and the leaders of the countries of the Commonwealth have long been asking themselves: Why is it that there are more and more documents and agreements after CIS summits, but our life is becoming worse and worse?

Just think what a paradox we have here. The more documents we adopt on coordination and integration, the greater the lack of coordination there is in our actions, the more quickly and fruitlessly the previously unified economic space slides apart, thereby undermining not only the ties that have evolved, but also the very fate of ordinary people. Thus, the idea of the meeting was born. The awareness of this paradox grew with every day, with each of our steps toward integration.

Finally, the moment came when concern over the growing destabilization in the CIS led us to realize a very important thing. We realized that such a paper integration could not continue any longer, that it gave rise to endless papers and agreements. Our peoples are expecting us to take real, responsible steps.

It is concern for the state of affairs in the CIS that gave rise to the renowned appeal by the president of Russia at the beginning of March to the heads of our states. It is concern over the lack of results of that integration that did not allow us to remain silent. In reply, Alma-Ata gave its support to Moscow, and the idea was born of holding a meeting of the heads of states in the nearest future at which one question would be discussed, a question that was approved on the agenda today. It is the question of the further strengthening of the CIS. No other questions were examined. No documents were signed apart from the protocol on instructions that I, as chairman, have been instructed to sign and that I will speak about further. Despite the rather complex situation in each of our states, all the states of the CIS viewed that initiative sympathetically and responded to it with great interest. None of us remained indifferent, because this question worries us and is of concern to us all.

I would like to draw your particular attention to this. Despite the difficult conditions and the rather difficult situation in Russia—in spite of certain opinions—the Russian president, just as we all are, is concerned with the problems of the CIS. At the beginning of March, he appealed to all of us. I emphasize the role played by Russian President Yeltsin in today's meeting. This is symptomatic because, at the present stage, precise and correct actions by the Russian leadership and by all power structures in Russia determine more than the political stability in Russia itself. In some sense, the development of events in Russia could seriously affect the progress of democratic reforms and market transformations in all CIS states today. I think it is in the interest of all of us that the process of reforms begun in Russia should continue. A president elected by popular vote and a legitimate parliament are guarantors of this.

Now, I will tell you the gist of what happened at our meeting. The first thing I would like to draw your attention to is that this meeting did not set for itself the task to consider and adopt any concrete decisions of an economic or organizational nature. We have already adopted many of those. It immediately took on a distinct political character. What was it manifested in? We discussed only one issue, but the most important one—as I have told you—was the question of the further strengthening of the CIS. I must say that this issue became ripe for discussion quite some time ago.

Someone might say that we are running ahead of events by trying to tackle such a vital, perhaps even strategic, issue. I would like to tell you, however, that sooner or later life itself would pose it to us all the same. Such unbelievable processes are going on in our countries that virtually no one can influence their course. What do we see around us today? We see war and death; humiliation of human dignity; disintegration of families; refugees; economic collapse; unemployment creeping near—not to say worse; and an increase in mortality rate and decrease in the birth rate.

Come on now, you journalists sitting in this hall. You are experienced people, who have seen all manner of things in your time. Who could have expected something like this? Who could have assumed such a thing? Had we not seen enough already? All ordinary people are asking themselves a similar question today. What has happened? What is going on? What sort of game are they up to this time? Or is it simply a case of helplessness and inability to take control of the situation? If we cannot put a stop to this on our own, perhaps the time has come for us to act together, but it requires us to act in a coordinated manner and to combine our resources. We have the potential, and we are able to turn this situation around.

It is a very difficult problem, however, which will be far from simple to solve. I would go further than that. I would say that it tends to be fairly difficult, even among the heads of state, to agree to discuss it together. The reason for this is obvious. On the one hand, each of our states has interests of its own and a situation peculiar to itself. We simply have an obligation to our own peoples to defend and strengthen our own sovereignty. This is obvious. However, there is another side to the issue. Why is it that, as soon as the subject of integration comes up, many regard this as meaning an inevitable return to the old union—to the empire, to the old ways of the administrative and command system—when it is now clear to everybody that a return to the past is simply impossible?

I am well aware that the question of whether or not to move toward closer union in the CIS is very difficult and complicated for a politician and a head of state. It is not every man who can find in himself the courage to answer this question. The result is destabilization, collapse, suffering, and torment. I wonder, how many more victims and how much more suffering must there be before we appreciate the need for closer coordination? How many more losses must we sustain before we stop dithering and doubting in this regard? Or perhaps the heads of state of our Commonwealth simply need the assistance of our parliaments? Take a look at the interesting experience being gained in this respect here, on Belarusian soil.

The question came up regarding the need for Belarus to join the treaty on collective security. The Belarus parliament examined it and adopted a decision. Perhaps other Commonwealth countries should adopt this experience. After all, the question of the CIS's future is not a political question. It is simply a human question—the most everyday question—the question of people's futures, of the possibility for us all to live normal human lives.

Before this meeting, all of us were moving, as it were, in a crowd, but each of us had his own thoughts. Each of us had his own ideas about the intermediate stages along the way, and the speed of travel. We all had confused and individual ideas about which way we were moving toward integration, what we wanted from the Commonwealth, what we were joining together for, and what we intended to use the Commonwealth for as an instrument. Each of us had his own vision of a desirable near and distant future and his own views on our relations with the other participants in this difficult and unexplored voluntary integration.

Now this extraordinary meeting has taken place. At the meeting, we stopped, as it were, and determined the direction in which we should proceed. Which of us is already prepared to go in that direction? How do we organize an effective joint movement? How do we join our resources? How do we employ them collectively in the interests of our peoples?

At the next meeting, which we planned by mutual accord to take place in mid-May, we will decide how to organize effective joint advancement, how to unite our resources, and how to apply them collectively in the interests of our peoples.

We have planned to solve these questions at our next meeting, which we have agreed will take place in the middle of May. We will be preparing for it very thoroughly. At our next meeting, we will be examining substantial work carried out by expert and working groups on documents that we made rough plans for today.

For its part, Kazakhstan proposed a whole range of questions of principle and strategy to be expanded at the next meeting. These questions concern key issues: closer integration in the economic, military, and foreign policy areas.

We have suggested setting up a union of agricultural workers. A meeting has already been held in Akmola, and it has been set up by all ministers in the former USSR states. A council of oil workers has held a session in Surgut. We have invited all industry ministers to convene in Karaganda at the end of May. Seven states have signed documents on the collective security council, the CIS charter, the economic zone, and the single currency zone. They were ready for close cooperation, hoping that our subsequent summits would really become important milestones on the road to a new integration in real terms. We cannot help but take into consideration the hopes and expectations of our peoples. Thank you for your attention.

Leaders Answer Questions

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[News conference by Uzbekistan President Islam Karimov, Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev, Ukraine President Leonid Kravchuk, Russian President Boris Yeltsin, Belarusian Supreme Soviet Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich, Moldovan President Mircha Snegur, and Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan at the conclusion of a summit of CIS heads of state in Minsk on 16 April, moderated by an unidentified speaker, with foreign and domestic correspondents—recorded]

[Text] [Moderator] The representatives of the press must agree what they are going to do—to start asking questions at once or perhaps you would like to address the heads of state.

[Unidentified speakers] Questions! Yes!

[Moderator] First microphone, please.

[Correspondent] Thank you. I am from INTERFAX. I would like to ask two questions, if I may, of the president of Uzbekistan and of the president of Kazakhstan. I would like to know the following: Rather low assessments of the CIS by the president of Uzbekistan have appeared in the press. Has his attitude to this structure changed after today's meeting? And my question to the president of Kazakhstan is: Nursultan Abishevich, it is known that it is your idea to set up a Central Asian security council. Could you please give me some concrete details—is this going to be some kind of an alternative to the CIS collective security council and in what form? Thank you.

[Karimov] I would first of all like to say that sometimes, when a part is taken out of a statement and is reported on the Ostankino TV channel, people may sometimes get a false, distorted picture. I would like to correct yesterday's TV report. Uzbekistan has always supported the CIS. You will remember that we have never spoken against the CIS. In this respect, since we have started talking about yesterday's statement, what happened was that when the president of Turkmenistan and I discussed this question, asked by a colleague of yours, I said the CIS was a useful formation, but that at the same time the organization's amorphous structure and its lack of efficiency, first of all in implementing the decisions adopted, called for a drastic reconsideration of the issue. Either we adopt some decisions on creating a mechanism for effective implementation of decisions we have made, and so either we set up this mechanism, or the CIS as such, as a declarative body, might simply compromise itself. That is what I said. And so you see, when a bit is torn out of context, the whole statement becomes distorted.

At the same time, by way of developing or adding to what Nursultan Abishevich, the president of Kazakhstan, has said here, I would like to give my opinion, that it should not be imagined that we made some discovery today and rediscovered America and that we had our eyes opened and we suddenly started to see and understand, and from now on there will be a sharp improvement in everything.

I would simply like to say that the state of affairs in the CIS has long worried all of us, and we all very well understand that it is an interstate association. Once a state has joined this association, it expects its interests to be taken into account and specific results achieved from its participation in this Commonwealth. That is why I would like to say in this respect that our meeting today was probably held not only to define some concrete direction of improving our work. You probably all know already, as many TV newsmen were present there, about Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's statement today in which he outlined the concrete directions of improving the work of the CIS. First and foremost, concrete and radical improvement of this work were proposed. Uzbekistan supports Russia's initiative, and it also supports Nursultan Abishevich's statement. At the same time, we should avoid making a lot of such statements, which remain mere statements and good wishes and which are frequently not followed up.

[Nazarbayev] Speaking at the 47th UN Assembly, I did actually propose to set up a council for confidence-building measures in Asia, but not as an alternative to the CSCE. This proposal has been supported by UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali and our diplomatic service is working on this. You understand that the Asian continent is enormous. Problems and conflicts are abundant there. They are out of reach for either the CSCE or the United Nations. If a conference could be convened that could prevent or liquidate such conflicts on the Asian continent and if this conference were to cooperate with CSCE and the United Nations, then we would get closer to the global principle of security in the world, I assume. The first meeting of representatives of the foreign ministers of 15 Asian states was held in Alma-Ata. Naturally, Russia, China, India, and other states that participate and support this cause are central to this problem. This initiative is so far taking its first steps, and we are hopeful about it.

[Moderator] Thank you. Go ahead, second microphone. Please, we request that you ask one question each.

[Correspondent] A question for the president of Ukraine. Leonid Makarovich, at today's meeting it was proposed that some kind of supranational structures be created for the coordination, for improving the coordination, of economic cooperation between the CIS states. How do you envisage (?economic cooperation in the CIS)? (?What were the results of today's meeting)?

[Kravchuk] Today we did not discuss the question of the creation of supranational structures, but I would support a supranational formula by which a supranational currency would be created. A currency union should be created, for then there would be a currency capable of determining life within the framework of the CIS, of improving the settlement of accounts, of improving all economic ties in mutual payments, regulating financing, banking, and other structures. I would support that, although in questions of economic interaction, consultative, coordinating structures could be created within the framework of economic interaction.

I would like to say a few words since everybody knows my position with regard to the CIS and often link the prospects of the development of the CIS, its strengthening, or as journalists say and write, the disintegration of the CIS, with Ukraine's position.

Today I can state categorically that whether the CIS exists and what sort of entity the CIS is will depend on 25 April.

If Russia goes along the path of reforms, democracy, and of strengthening the processes begun in Russia back in 1990, having confirmed this course in August 1991 to the whole world, if the people of Russia and Russia support this course on 25 April, the CIS will exist, will be a democratic formation, and will be a structure which will bring new life to us and to all. I believe that the people of Russia and Russia will stand up and support this course with all their might. If something else should happen—which I don't believe will be the case—then the CIS will not exist. I state this with full responsibility because the forces that are operating there today do not want the CIS but the USSR, and a return to the Union is not possible. Second, if somebody embarks upon that path, then that path will be watered with lots of blood. That can be said with full responsibility.

Therefore, the future of the CIS, its content and prospects, and the democratic future of all our states within the CIS, and not only within the CIS, today depend on 25 April. I am profoundly convinced of this, and I should like to state my conviction—the conviction of a man who has a particular position, and you know what my attitude is to the heads of state: I often criticize them sharply. But today I can say with firm conviction that 25 April will decide the fate of the CIS and the future of our peoples and of our states.

[Karimov] I would like to add something to what Leonid Makarovich has said. I am aware there is currently very great agitation in Moscow and in Russia as a whole among forces suffering from nostalgia for the old Union. Many central publications are, generally speaking, openly attempting to blame all those who in their eyes destroyed the Union and saying that the only way out of the present situation in all our states is to return to the old system and to create a USSR.

As a representative of Uzbekistan I want to say that we have no such nostalgia. We will never return to the past. For us the only way is forward, only forward. I wish to assure you that in this respect we fully support what is being done by the executive authority under the leadership of President Yeltsin. I am not saying that I am a 100-percent supporter of all reforms. I understand the many mistakes and difficulties in effecting reform in Russia. But nonetheless I state categorically that we are equally interested in the victory of reforms, the implementation of reforms, and the implementation of the course being followed in Russia. I am speaking in the name of Uzbekistan.

In this respect, I would like to declare that when it is sometimes said that things are bad everywhere and that there have been no good signs anywhere since the collapse of the Union, I categorically disagree with that.

Many people even forget that, alongside the difficulties we have in the economy, there is a great deal we have worked to achieve, a great deal we have fought for and won since the Union ceased to exist. It is this aspect to which I should like to draw your attention. And the people who live as sovereign, independent states understand full well what it was that gave that independence. There will be no going back. And so when we speak such a lot of economic difficulties, we must understand that a transition from one system to another is never easy and never happens so well that we live better than we did before.

Therefore we must give this its due and we want to say: independence not only relates to the economy. Independence also means spiritual independence, independence is above all the independence of nations, the independence of states. In this respect, there is no way back for us. And all those who try to campaign for that quite simply do not know the situation, I think, do not know how people feel in our regions, they do not know the situation or the mood of the people who live in Uzbekistan.

[Zenkovich] Vyacheslav Zenkovich, INTERFAX agency. I have a question for President Nazarbayev. What is the reason, please, for the rescheduling of the meeting of heads of state in April? And if I may ask a second question, this time to Boris Nikolayevich, I know it is something of interest to everyone. Boris Nikolayevich, in just two words, please, outline the essence of your proposals on strengthening the Commonwealth.

[Nazarbayev] Given that we held this extraordinary meeting today, we discussed some issues; for the Yerevan meeting there are still questions such as, for example, the celebration of the victory of the 50th anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War. Well, we shall have to assemble in 15 days' time for that issue.

The second issue is that of setting up a economic coordinating committee: This matter is not ready, work has to be done on it. In this connection, we are not canceling the scheduled regular meeting, we are simply switching the date; that has always been our practice.

[Moderator] Thank you. Boris Nikolayevich?

[Yeltsin] It is impossible in two words to express what I said in my address at the council of heads of state about our proposals in Russia for improving and strengthening the Commonwealth of Independent States. Therefore we shall simply duplicate and distribute these proposals to all the mass media.

[Unidentified speaker] When?

[Unidentified speaker] In the hall, today, the press secretary will...

[Nazarbayev, interrupting] I could add, Boris Nikolayevich, that IZVESTIYA published an appeal to the CIS heads of state, you will recall. The main elements in this were outlined in that.

[Correspondent] [Indistinct question to Yeltsin on the rise of crime despite the continued existence of bodies of law and order in the CIS]

[Yeltsin] Well, I can say that as regards Russia, we are tackling this job on a large scale, we are fighting corruption, bribe-taking, and crime. As for analyzing the reasons, they are quite obvious and can be linked to the general crisis, the crisis in the economy and in politics, the constitutional crisis, the social crisis, the increase in the crime rate. All this is happening simultaneously as such unique reforms are taking place in our states. Of course, this does not mean that this evil is unavoidable and there is no need to fight it. No doubt, we must fight it. But until now, admittedly, our attention has been distracted by other problems and we have let things run their course for a short while. But I think if now we tackle matters the situation can be put to rights.

[Correspondent] I am from MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI. A question for the president of Russia. Esteemed Boris Nikolayevich, as far as we know, you and the president of Kazakhstan were the initiators of this meeting and did a sufficiently large amount of energetic work to organize it in a short time. What brought about this unscheduled meeting precisely at this moment? Is it mere chance that the meeting of CIS heads of state is taking place at the same time as the interparliamentary assembly in St. Petersburg? Thank you.

[Yeltsin] Perhaps the interparliamentary assembly had in mind that we were gathering at this time. In setting our date, we bore in mind that they were convening at this time.

[Nazarbayev] Thank you. I can confirm—so that there should be no feeling of unpleasantness left—that I will return once again to the initiative of the president of Russia and the support of Kazakhstan and my initiative in this respect when I said, I proposed, that we should meet in the first 10 days of April. This is how we found the opportunity to meet at the present time.

[Moderator] Microphone 3. Go ahead please.

[Correspondent] This is a question from INTERFAX to the president of Russia. Boris Nikolayevich, tell me please, when we speak about achieving an intensification of integration, what is Russia—in which such great hopes are placed as one of the elements of integration—doing at the present time? What preparations are being made, what steps are being taken for example?

[Yeltsin] For the moment, neither we nor our partners are satisfied with this work. Therefore, it is not appropriate here to highlight, so to speak, some of our victories in this respect. This is why we have gathered for the first time not to deal with 20 petty specific issues—perhaps not petty, but big ones—but for all that particular issues.

We heads of state have never gathered together to just discuss, without rushing, what would become of the CIS. There is a lot of speculation on the subject, whether it will survive or not, whether it is disintegrating or dying slowly. There have been all sorts of epithets regarding this process. That's why it was very important for us this time to define our position and to say that the CIS will exist—I agree with Leonid Makarovich—providing, of course, that democracy wins at the referendum on 25 April. I also believe that it will win. The CIS will develop and I expounded today what measures we should take in order for this integration to be deeper and for it to strengthen the cooperation among our countries.

[Moderator] [Word indistinct] Microphone 4, go ahead please.

[Kharko] Thank you. Viktor Kharko, Belarus television. A question to the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarus. Stanislav Stanislavovich, could you say to what extent one of the ways of strengthening the Commonwealth was examined at today's meeting from the viewpoint of the interdependence of the formation of an economic union with the obligatory joining of a system of collective security by the CIS member states? Was the question put like this? Could you express your attitude and your position once again in relation to this issue?

[Shushkevich] The question was not put this way. The fact is that on the issue of close economic interaction there exists total unity of view among all the participants. However, this total unity of all the participants is just as declared; i.e., all are in favor of a customs union—I did not hear any exceptions—all are in favor of an interbank union, all of us are in favor of having a single means of payment—and I would consider this the priority issue. It should be examined first. Unfortunately, according to the opinion of other participants of the meeting, there are other issues that should be examined first. I think that preparatory work will show how soon these issues will be prepared. As for economic interaction, there was no formal confrontation whatsoever today; i.e., all were agreed on this. This makes me happy. As for joining together in a military union, no conditions were formulated and the issue was not even put on the agenda of the meeting.

[Moderator] Thank you. Let's agree on short questions from the microphones. Microphone one, please.

[Correspondent] I have a question for Moldovan President Snegur and for Armenian President Ter-Petrosyan. One of you represents a state that has signed the Community charter while the other represents a state that has not signed the Community charter. Do any problems exist in the relations between these two groups of states? And how do you see them?

[Moderator] Thank you.

[Snegur] There are no problems as such. All member countries of the CIS enjoy equal rights. This was determined not only at today's meeting so that all should treat each other equally. This is all the more so since, on many aspects, those countries that have not signed the charter also (?act) in accordance with those decisions and [words indistinct] that were determined today, especially in the economic sphere.

[Ter-Petrosyan] I am in full agreement with what my colleague has said.

[Correspondent] You obviously know that our President Stanislav Stanislavovich Shushkevich is opposed to a military alliance or—how can one put it—a defensive alliance with Russia. At the same time, parliament voted for that question. What is your attitude to that situation, and how will the situation develop further?

[Yeltsin] Those are internal Belarusian affairs for the chairman of the Supreme Soviet, their Supreme Soviet, and I do not interfere in their internal affairs.

[Shushkevich] First of all, I would like to say that if BELORUSSKIY CHAS is speaking here, it should not introduce fundamental confusion. We have a union with Russia, we have a treaty, and it is about time BELORUSSKIY CHAS found out about that and didn't put up with correspondents who introduce confusion at this level of affairs.

[Moderator] Microphone 3.

[Correspondent] A question from the Latvian newspaper DIENA to Mr. Kravchuk. Leonid Makarovich, when making a speech to Romanian parliamentarians in Kiev recently, you spoke about your conception of setting up a security zone in Central and Eastern Europe. What kind of conception is this? What place is allotted to it in the CIS and the Baltic states? And, another thing, in connection with the decision of the Supreme Soviet of Belarussia on joining the system of collective security, what is your attitude to the stand taken by the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Belarus who refused, well did not refuse, but spoke out against signing and proposed that a referendum should be held? And how do you, as the president of Ukraine, which is also striving for neutrality and which has not joined the CIS system of collective security, regard such an act on the part of Belarus? Thank you.

[Kravchuk] The first thing I want to say is that again, in support of comrade Yeltsin, I would prefer not to comment on the position taken by the Belarus parliament and the chairman of the Belarus Supreme Soviet, especially because I think Stanislav Stanislavovich, when answering a similar question, has explained his position perfectly clearly. Moreover, I respect Belarus and the chairman of its Supreme Soviet as well as other Belarus leaders and believe that Belarus, as well as any other state, has a right to chose its own position.

[Correspondent] I would like to ask Nursultan Nabishiyevich: In all previous CIS summits, you usually come forward as a rationalist and critical politician. In this case you were one of the initiators of this summit, together with Boris Nikolayevich. My question is whether you are happy with the summit, and can you say that the CIS, which seemed to have been conceived on a Kazakhstan- Russia-Belarus axis—well, at least, there were such assumptions—can you say that this axis remains as was originally conceived?

[Nazarbayev] I cannot tell you that we have achieved something at the maximum level, but at a reasonably good level, nevertheless. I personally expected no more than that and let my colleagues forgive me for assuming so. We had to reach some concrete agreements on the course the CIS states are to follow and tell our people about it—as President Yeltsin already said today in his speech. For example, we could, at least, tell people that from, say, 15 May or 1 May—any date could do, for that matter—we are dismantling all the customs barriers so our entrepreneurs and industrialists can transport their goods without impediment and then set them up properly. If we could say that on the 15th or 20th we will sit down and, at last, establish a ruble zone and so on, this would certainly be something more concrete. I believe that what we have achieved and the fact that we got together are very useful and represent a major turning point. After all, we have specifically charged our experts with preparing for the next meeting, as we said here, for sitting down peacefully at last and tackling specific issues.

Yeltsin Stresses Support

OW1604190593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1859 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian President Boris Yeltsin told an Interfax correspondent after the press conference in Minsk that he had felt "strong and active support from all delegates at the summit." All heads of delegations at the closed session "unequivocally declared their support for the Russian president's policies and for reforms in Russia," he stressed.

Shakhray Views Meeting 'Very Positively'

LD1704001193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1830 GMT 16 Apr 93

[By BELINFORM correspondent for TASS]

[Text] Minsk, 16 Apr—"I assess today's meeting in Minsk very positively," Sergey Shakhray, vice prime minister of the Russian Government, told BELINFORM and TASS correspondents in an exclusive interview. He noted that any process, including the setting up of the Commonwealth, must mature. It seems that this time has come.

"The initiatives put forward by President Boris Yeltsin are not something completely new. This is what life demands. If we want to integrate, then we must also tackle customs, currency, and other issues. Let us remember that a good agreement was reached in Surgut, which means that life itself pushes us toward forming a confederative nucleus within the Commonwealth. Although the word 'confederation' was not used today, this is nothing other than a union for reaching a common aim on the basis of equality of all the states. I could draw the following conclusion: attempting to form a certain nucleus within the Commonwealth is a possibility to preserve the CIS. Russia, Kazakhstan, and—it seems to me—Belarus are already prepared to set an example for this."

Commenting on the rare unanimity with which Boris Yeltsin was supported by Commonwealth heads of state, Shakhray noted that both Kravchuk and Karimov understand very well what can be expected if the reds and browns manage to seize power. It will be impossible to avoid a sea of blood. This state of affairs is also pushing the CIS republics toward the process of integration.

"I believe that life itself will soon force us to destroy customs barriers," the Russian vice prime minister said. "Of course, I am not talking about restoring the USSR, however, but about reconstructing a truly democratic commonwealth."

Shakhray also touched on the speech made in parliament today by Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy. As a legal expert, I know that every document needs to be studied carefully, Shakhray said.

Nazarbayev Interviewed

LD1704125593 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1100 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Interview with Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev by I. Perfilev after a news conference in Moscow on 17 April—recorded; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] [Nazarbayev] I am convinced that in any case the processes of democratization in Russia and the building of a strong Russian state and toward reform will continue. Kazakhstan will always strive to build the best possible relations with Russia.

[Perfilev] Kazakhstani President Nursultan Nazarbayev, who was chairman at yesterday's meeting of Commonwealth heads of state in Minsk, made that statement at a news conference in Moscow. Replying to numerous questions by journalists, President Nazarbayev gave our program an interview:

President Nazarbayev, the presidents at Minsk probably bore 25 April and the referendum in mind.

[Nazarbayev] None of us can say that this is only Russia's affair, because the progress of all our reforms depends on the continuation of the processes of democratization and reform, strong Russian statehood, and the unity of Russian statehood.

[Perfilev] You and I were born in the same country—perhaps even twice over in the same country, because I was born in Kazakhstan as well. And now we live in different countries. What should presidents and politicians do in order not to, as we put it today, cut where it hurts most?

[Nazarbayev] I don't know who you could call an ethnic minority in Kazakhstan. Thirty percent of our citizens in Kazakhstan are Russians, citizens of our republic. So I would like there to be no barriers to relations between people created as our Commonwealth develops in the future. Should we destroy that? We should preserve our friendship like the apple of our eye.

Snegur Statement Reviews Summit

AU1804154593 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1630 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Text] Minsk BASAPRESS, 17/4/1993—During the special meeting in Minsk between the heads of states of the CIS not a single agreement had been signed. Only a protocol concerning consolidation of the CIS was approved and it stipulates that the heads of the member states will meet for the session during 28 April in Minsk in order to elaborate a system of projects of agreements for the consolidation of the CIS, states a communique released today by the Press Service of the President of Moldova.

The projects of the agreements which were elaborated on the basis of discussions during the actual session will be examined in the course of the next session of the heads of states planned for May. While gathering together for the session in Zaslav, the suburban of the capital of Belarus, the heads of states examined the system of security of the CIS, principles concerning efficient activities on a common economic zone, the creation of bodies for economic coordination, and coordination in the domain of foreign policy between members of the CIS which signed to become members of the CIS.

After his return from the enlarged session, President Boris Yeltsin presented a Declaration stating that within the CIS structures for control and coordination for fulfilling signed agreements will be created.

During the press conference, at the end of this meeting, the heads of states declared that in case the referendum on 25 April in Russia ends in the undermining of democracy, there might be a possibility of a social revolution terminating the CIS.

President Mircea Snegur declared in his interview released to Radio Rossii that there were no attempts to put Chisinau under political or economical pressure, because Moldova did not agree to sign for membership of the CIS, indicated the press communique from the President.

CIS Parliamentary Council Meets in St. Petersburg

LD1604175693 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1647 GMT 16 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondents Irina Zolotareva and Lyudmila Fomicheva]

[Text] St. Petersburg April 16 TASS—The meeting of the CIS Parliamentary Council was attended by delegations from Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan and Ukraine, as well as by a delegation from Azerbaijan who were present as observers.

"Not all of the invited parliament leaders have arrived," Assembly Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov told the council, "but their failure to arrive was not dictated by political considerations but by the overload of law-making activity".

The meeting discussed a number of problems and supported Russian Parliament Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov's proposal underlying the protocol on concerted efforts of the parliaments in preparing for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of victory over Nazism in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-45. The protocol contains a set of recommendations for holding the celebrations.

Khasbulatov Address

LD1604213293 Russian Television Network in Russian 1445 GMT 16 Apr 93

["Concluding remarks" by Russian Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov at the CIS Parliamentary Council at the Taurida Palace in St. Petersburg on 16 April; from the "Referendum" program—recorded]

[Text] I did not hear one dull or commonplace speech. They were all very interesting and necessary, especially for that category of deputies who already have forgotten that originally they were elected. There are a lot of them, in that category of deputies who have been waging a desperate battle against the Congress and the Supreme

Soviet. They long ago joined forces with government organizations, receiving—if you do not mind my saying so—inducements for voting in various ways, for acting as yes-men. There are certain forms of incentive for voting blindly. Unfortunately you are not helping us very much. Today we expressed criticism, rightful criticism, of the Supreme Soviet—and were right to do so, but are you helping us, the Supreme Soviet? You have been saying directly and correctly here that you are that grassroots organization between the citizen and the authorities. You deputies know this perfectly well, but you are not doing anything about it. I am criticizing you now. I politely agree with your criticism, but you must agree with my criticism of you, and please draw conclusions from it. That was the first thing.

Second, I will be frank with you; I did not like some of the thoughts expressed in some wise speeches saying something along the following lines: You remembered us because you found yourselves in a very difficult situation. I am not in a difficult situation. The state is in a difficult situation, and we are helping our Motherland, not Khasbulatov or members of the Supreme Soviet. We are taking action, we also are doing something about the referendum. We have not let anyone have television or radio. What did we do? A year and a half ago we adopted one of the most democratic laws, as it was then called, on the media. We adopted the right law, but excuse me friends, how could I foresee that someone already had some hidden thoughts to seize the media, to partially buy it out and sell some of it, and to partially disintegrate it, so that this weapon, which brings the words of truth to the people, could be turned against the Supreme Soviet given the first opportunity—a situation in which this legislative body decides not to act as an errand boy?

Tell me, how could I foresee this? I have never had a career in the party. I am a professor, an academic who worked in colleges and universities. How would I know all the cunning tricks that were cherished by these Rasputins, together with Poltoranin? How would I know? [applause] That is why we have not prepared and are not going to prepare for this. It is not our business. We are not the executive power. We do not attempt to execute control over anything, apart from the activities, in other words, the sphere that, according to our legislation and Constitution, comes under the Supreme Soviet. We are not a parallel government. We proceed from the notion that there is such a thing as honor, such a thing as decency, and such a thing as one's word. If these categories do not mean anything to some people, I am not going to play their games. They mean something to me and always have. That is why we are not planning to take any punitive measures against the media, but the thing is that this business ought to be regulated.

That is why I proposed three months ago that parliamentary television should be organized. However, the apparatus subordinate to me is doing everything to delay that organization in one way or another. [applause] That is interesting, is it not?

Does the Supreme Soviet have a program or concept for ending the crazy and barbaric growth in the prices of foodstuffs, essential goods, communal services, the turbulent taxation policy? It did and does! I would like to say it openly for the first time that all this will lead us to a collapse and that the results we have today will materialize. It has been said recently—and this idea was then supported by Shumeyko and Filatov; I put forward that concept at the Supreme Soviet, then in a brochure; you should have it; that was last February, if I remember correctly, before the Sixth Congress, over a year ago—Do you remember how the Sixth Congress became a final parting of the ways for us on the economic program? For then we drew up a very strong package of changes to the Constitution in accordance with which the rights of the president were reduced, curtailed very substantially, and the government was strengthened, and so forth.

But then the government's trump card, which incidentally played a certain, even substantial role in ensuring that these amendments to the Constitution were not adopted, was this renowned aid of $24 billion with the help of which some deputies were deceived. Then, if you remember, but most of you probably do not, I ridiculed that. I have been dealing with a market economy for a quarter of a century and know full well that businessmen would not invest dollars—and neither you or I would in their place—unless they were sure that clever people were governing this country [laughter, some applause]; second, that the parliament adopts clever laws; third, that you implement these laws; and so on and so forth, and a great many other conditions. But is it not really clear? Well, why are we deceiving ourselves? We have spoken of that help already, but that action is shameful. The majority of deputies are working people. Night and day they are slaving away and truly working on these draft laws. The majority of these draft laws have been elaborated in the bowels of the Supreme Soviet and not in the government.

We only ever seem to be making corrections to laws that are presented to us by the government. I have to add that we correct them in the sense of improving them and changing them in a radical direction. We would have been willing to turn the majority of these idiotic decrees into laws—if they had been submitted to us; they would thus have been legitimized, they would work then, they would work. This is where the problem lies. So naturally we just cannot have an influence on things like this. [passage indistinct] So we had to say: All right, we are ready to stand for re-election together with you. You are hounding one of the branches of power, although it is much more effective than you, but if you insist, let us stand for re-election. No, they do not want to; they want to bring down one of the branches of power. No, that will not happen; it will not happen. If we are going to stand for re-election, we will stand for re-election together. [applause]

By the way, this has absolutely nothing to do with the results of the referendum. I, for example, know the results of the referendum. [laughter] None of the four questions is a mystery to me. So this is why I said: Listen, this is not what we should be doing. Let us deal with the economy in 1993; we will put it in order, improve a little what we created, without reference to 73 years, for 30 of which you were involved. [prolonged applause and laughter] Why should we, the legislature, have to provide a basis for the fact that we are essential? Can you imagine how distorted our way of thinking is, if we have to prove that we are doing useful work? Sometimes even the intelligentsia must prove that, but imagine how frightened citizens have to be for the legislature to have to prove it is needed! Have you already forgotten the sound of footsteps and the sound of boots? Do you need that again? Do you not understand that if this noisy, funny congress and this parliament—which seems useless, superfluous, and harmful at times—do not exist, there will the sound of boots and the heel kicking on your door at night, at two o'clock in the morning? Surely this is not incomprehensible to our fellow-citizens? If it is comprehensible, why should we prove that the existence of the legislature is essential?

Esteemed colleagues, democracy is a very expensive thing, a very expensive thing. And if society does not want to find itself the prisoner of totalitarianism—and as we know from history, totalitarianism and dictatorship do not have to be communist, they do not have to be communist; you know that a communist dictatorship is a deviation from history; anticommunist dictatorships occur more often in history—so I'm sorry, but what difference does it make to me, an ordinary citizen, what sort of dictatorship it is, what color the tickets in its pocket? What is important for me is that I do not get that heel knocking on my door—communist or anticommunist. When will our journalists, our media people, and ordinary citizens realize this? This is what we have to remind the citizen about when he goes to vote.

Khasbulatov News Conference

LD1904121493 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1430 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] The consultative conference of heads and authorized representatives of the supreme soviets, parliaments, of the CIS states ended in St. Petersburg today. Ruslan Imranovich Khasbulatov, chairman of the council of the Interparliamentary Assembly and of Russia's Supreme Soviet, addressed a news conference on the results of the conference. We have just received a recording of what he said:

[Begin Khasbulatov recording] Our working meeting was an official one, it can be said, held in accordance with our agreement. Frank exchanges of views take place at such meetings, as a rule.

At this meeting we tackled three issues. First, I can tell you frankly—and this is our shared view—that our parliamentarians are not entirely happy with preparations for the ratification of treaties and agreements which are being concluded by the heads of state and government. It is taking quite a long time for some of them to come up for debate in our respective parliaments. Some of them, in our view, have certain shortcomings. But in general we feel that this delay is proving quite a serious obstacle to the development of the Commonwealth in general and each of our countries in particular. From our point of view, nothing is satisfactory here.

Far be it from us to dump problems on the executive authorities. There was much self-criticism. We focused our attention more on the need for parliamentarians to be more involved at the initial drafting stages of such treaties and agreements, as well as in preparations for their discussion at the ratification stage in national parliaments.

Second, we discussed a problem which is a very sensitive one for all our countries—the social welfare of servicemen. As you know, all our countries face virtually the same problem. Naturally, related problems were also raised. Generally speaking, we feel that here too some legislative movement would be in the interests of our citizens in uniform, the servicemen who are defending the interests of their people and their state, who are carrying out their constitutional duty. Here too we found, on the whole, a common denominator, a common approach. Here too we reached mutual understanding.

Third, we spoke about the preparations for and holding of celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the victory over fascism. As you know, all our peoples took part in this great, historic battle. Naturally, we are united by a wish to prevent any elements of fascism from raising their heads in any country. Our peoples paid a bitter price, a huge price for the victory. We support the efforts made on this by the heads of state and government, and the relevant documents signed by them. Therefore, we have decided to stage certain parliamentary events, events of an interparliamentary nature. [end recording]

Further Khasbulatov Comments

OW1604181893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1728 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Participants of a consultative conference of leaders and plenipotentiary representatives of CIS countries' parliaments which concluded its work on Friday [16 April] in St. Petersburg agreed to more openly demonstrate the preparatory work aimed at the ratification of treaties and agreements concluded by heads of state and governments of CIS countries. This statement was voiced by head of the Russian parliament Ruslan Khasbulatov at a press conference conducted after the conference.

In response to our Interfax correspondent concerning his attitude to the idea of an economic union within the CIS, Khasbulatov pointed out that he was in favor of this initiative put forward by the Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev and he "is very glad that Yeltsin has at last agreed to this idea."

Speaking about major difficulties facing the country on the eve of the upcoming referendum in Russia, Khasbulatov underlined that he "is doing everything to prevent a serious bloody conflict in the nation." Commenting Yeltsin's statement saying that he has prepared a decree stipulating that votes at the referendum will be calculated on the basis of the law but not a corresponding resolution of the 9th Congress of the People's Deputies, Khasbulatov emphasized that "Constitution is the most reliable guarantee preventing arbitrariness irrespective where from it comes." "There are no adversaries for us, we should defend all compatriots," chairman of the parliament underlined. He called senior officials to act in the framework of the Constitution.

Interparliamentary Assembly To Meet 21-22 May

LD1604215493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1909 GMT 16 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS]

[Text] St. Petersburg April 16 TASS—The third plenary session of the Interparliamentary Assembly will be held in St. Petersburg from May 21-22, according to a decision made at today's session of the Council of the Interparliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth countries.

Among the items on the agenda of the future plenary session are issues of strengthening the defense potential of the Commonwealth countries and extending their cooperation in this field, as well as preparing some legislative acts.

Besides, the today's session of the council has approved a resolution recommending the parliaments of the Commonwealth countries to speed up ratification of the Commonwealth Charter adopted on January 22, 1993. In addition to the six existing commissions of the Interparliamentary Assembly, the session of the council has set up another two commissions—a control-and-budget one and the other on foreign political affairs. The council has also approved an editorial board of the "Bulletin of the Interparliamentary Assembly" magazine and decided to make preparations for establishing an international institute for the Commonwealth problems.

Baltic Pime Ministers Meet in Vilnius

OW1704172193 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1632 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Saturday [17 April], Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian prime ministers Adolfas Slezevicius, Ivars Godmanis and Mart Laar met in Vilnius to discuss the possibility of drafting and signing a tripartite agreement on free trade and an agreement on a single visa system, as well as the schedule of the Russian troops' withdrawal and possible joint moves in this area.

Earlier, the Latvian and Estonian leaders had expressed their skeptical attitude to the possibility of signing a tripartite agreement on free trade in view of Lithuania's position. Tallinn and Riga believe that the Lithuanian leaders pursue a policy which goes against the principles of market economy.

On the eve of the meeting, Estonian Prime Minister Mart Laar said he intended to ask Lithuania to sign an agreement on free trade with Estonia. A Lithuanian-Latvian trade and economic agreement for 1993 is expected to be signed, too.

An Estonian-Latvian free-trade agreement is also ready for signing.

Lithuania, Latvia Sign Agreement

OW1804160793 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1535 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Lithuania and Latvia signed a trade and economic agreement for this year as Prime Ministers of the three Baltic states met in Vilnius on Saturday [17 April].

Lithuanian Premier Adolfas Slezevicius speaking afterwards described the paper as a step towards signing a bilateral free trade treaty between the two countries. He also spoke of agreement reached with his Estonian counterpart about preparing a similar agreement with Estonia.

For his part, Latvian Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis said that preferential trade between the three states, uniform customs controls and Russian troop withdrawals were top of the agenda. He was hopeful of Lithuanian support to Latvia's position on Russian pullout during next month's talks between Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev and Lithuanian officials. The three leaders had also agreed on a common position in dialogue with Russian on a wide range of issues.

Estonian Premier Mart Laar pointed to the significance of financial cooperation between the three countries holding out promises of help to Lithuania in shifting to its own national currency.

Laar said there were far too many resolutions approved by the three countries in the past and that now was the time to pass over to cooperation as such, above all in the economic area.

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 17 Apr

LD1704072593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0525 GMT 17 Apr 93

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow April 17 TASS—Today's newspapers focus on the CIS summit held in the Belarussian capital Minsk on Friday and a nationwide referendum scheduled for April 25.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA carries a report by its special correspondent in Minsk, saying that the agenda of the summit was the embodiment of Kazakh and Russian presidents' initiatives to strengthen the Commonwealth.

"The change in Ukraine's position was obvious. Earlier, it displayed categoric independence, whereas today it seeks unity. Apparently, Kravchuk and his associates realised that without Russian fuel and its energy resources Ukraine will only be a satellite, but not a planet in the European Community," the newspaper said.

TRUD, a newspaper of Russian trade unions with a circulation of over 3 million copies, carry interviews with deputy chairman of the Russian Parliament Nikolay Ryabov and Russian vice-premier and chairman of the state committee for affairs of the Federation and nationalities, Sergey Shakhray.

Ryabov said that he was not happy about the decision to hold the referendum." I hold the view that all-Russian referendums should not be held, and there should be no mention of them in the Constitution. We mechanically accepted the last epoch's idea of a nationwide vote which was merely declared, but never held," Ryabov said.

Shakhray has a different opinion. He believes that the democratic potential of the referendum exists. "Society's choice is scarce, and this potential should be used to bring the ship of statehood to early elections," Shakhray said. He pointed out that if confidence in the president was expressed, Yeltsin would carry on the reforms which he had launched, and take steps which he had announced on March 20, i.e. he would offer a draft of a new Constitution and prepare a basis for early elections. "If a vote of no-confidence is passed, the president will surrender to the will of the people, as he has said many times before," Shakhray said.

Alexander Goltz, an observer of KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, believes that questions are put to the referendum in such a way that neither side will manage to win a complete victory. Answers given to the questions of the referendum will offer a wide opportunity for interpretation. "Anyway, one way or the other, April 25 will inevitably be followed by April 26, and we shall not wake up in another country, no matter whatever the result of the vote might be. All parties involved in the conflict will have to come to terms all the same," Goltz said.

PRAVDA publishes a speech on problems of crime and corruption in the country, made by Russian vice-president in parliament on Friday, and entitled "Russia, Say No to Mafia". The newspaper carries an article featuring one of the problems mentioned by Rutskoy, and connected with the sales of the so-called "red mercury" abroad.

Newspapers carry reports about court proceedings against leaders of the 1991 abortive coup d'etat. KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA believes that, by all signs, the defence is attempting to play for time. "The interest of the opposite side (in politics, not in court) is not to let a crowd with red flags turn the defendants into national heroes," the newspaper writes.

Having reminded of the fact that the court had postponed hearings for an indefinite period of time, PRAVDA writes "that at any rate, going to the referendum on April 25, the country will not have a juridical verdict yet whether coup plotters have committed an act of treason. Although, strictly speaking, it is not so important in the country obsessed by its present-day problems," the newspaper said.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA believes the break in the court proceedings will last until doctors submit an official conclusion about the possibility of hospitalized Alexander Tizyakov to return to the courtroom.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA writes that the first joint exercises of the Russian and U.S. Air Force with the aim of coordinating search and rescue operations under conditions of the extreme north will take place next week in the area of the settlement of Tiksi. During the exercises representatives of the Air Force of the two countries will coordinate actions to "save a crew of a plane which had an accident" beyond the polar circle. The catastrophe will be simulated to take place on one of northern islands 370 kilometers north of Tiksi.

Newspapers carry numerous articles devoted to Easter celebrations in Russia. TRUD carries on its front page an Easter message by the patriarch of Moscow and all Russia Alexey II, in which he addressed believers on the eve of the great religious holiday.

Swedish Foreign Minister Meets With Kozyrev

LD1904095693 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0906 GMT 19 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Moscow, 19 Apr—[Russian Foreign Minister] Andrey Kozyrev had talks in the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry today with Swedish Foreign Minister Margaretha Af Ugglas, who arrived in Moscow yesterday for a short working visit. The two sides discussed the current state of and prospects for Russian Federation-Swedish relations, issues of mutual cooperation in developing the CSCE processes, and topical regional and international problems.

Welcoming Margeretha Af Ugglas, Russian Federation Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev stressed the importance which the Russian Federation side attributes to the talks with her "in her capacity as Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, and also as CSCE chairman." He wished her success in her forthcoming tour of the Central Asian states of the former USSR.

CSCE Principles Stressed

OW1904105593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1025 GMT 19 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Moscow believes that all former Soviet republics should be guided by the principles, and, most importantly, mechanisms of the CSCE, Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev stated shortly before his talks with Swedish Foreign Minister Margaretta Af Ugglas.

The Swedish foreign minister arrived in Moscow as the chairperson of the CSCE. In this capacity she will visit five Central Asian republics: Turkmenistan (April 20), Uzbekistan (April 21), Tajikistan (April 22), Kazakhstan (April 23) and Kyrgyzstan (April 24). The program of her tour will include talks with these countries' leaders and foreign ministers.

In view of Margaretha Af Ugglas' forthcoming visit to Tajikistan, Andrey Kozyrev said: "It is very important that Russia's special role and responsibility be backed by CSCE efforts, including those made in Tajikistan."

Kozyrev Initiative on Yugoslavia

OW1904104493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1038 GMT 19 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A "party of war" is struggling its way to power in Russia, Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev stated on Monday after his talks with Swedish Foreign Minister Margaretha af Ugglas. If it wins, it will plunge the former Soviet Union into a national-patriotic adventure, similar to the one in former Yugoslavia, the only difference being that it will cause much more human loss," he continued. [quotation marks as received] He also noted that voting in support of the president during the referendum would be a vote for Russia's membership in the CSCE and observance of all its principles and mechanisms and for the CIS and of a civilized way of life.

The Russian foreign minister proposed a new initiative to settle the crisis in former Yugoslavia. He said that the UN Security Council should hold a meeting of foreign ministers with a possible visit to Europe. "I would be ready to hold such a meeting in Sarajevo or Srebrenica," said Kozyrev.

The other option is to resume the London conference on settling the conflict in former Yugoslavia, also at the level of foreign ministers.

Kozyrev noted that the Russian national-patriots' sympathy for the Serbs should not be mistaken for the position of President Yeltsin and the Russian government. He explained that Russia had abstained from voting in the UN Security Council on toughening sanctions against former Yugoslavia because it believed that it would be more correct to do so on April 26. Thanks to our efforts, the Serbs have not developed their offensive on the besieged Srebrenica, said Kozyrev. The Bosnian Serbs and the Belgrade leaders should use the nine days before the resolution's coming into force for finding ways of settling the crisis, not for making threats to the world community, he said.

According to Interfax sources, on Tuesday Andrey Kozyrev is likely to fly out to Arkhangelsk for talks with the Norwegian Foreign Minister.

Military Intervention Not on Agenda

LD1904122593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1159 GMT 19 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Moscow April 19 TASS—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev believes foreign ministers of UN Security Council member states should hold a meeting "maybe in Sarajevo or Srebrenica to demonstrate to all the parties that we are seriously determined to participate in solving the conflict" in former Yugoslavia.

Participants in the London conference on former Yugoslavia should also hold a meeting "maybe on the territory of Yugoslavia itself", he said on Monday at a press conference after meeting Swedish Foreign Minister Margaretha Af Ugglas who also acts as CSCE chairwoman.

Russia does not object tougher UN sanctions against the union republic of Yugoslavia, but believes they should be introduced after April 26 in order to provide additional time for Serbs to adopt the right decision, Kozyrev said.

Russia is indignant over the bloodshed going on in Bosnia "in which all parties are involved, but where we see a certain pressure from the Serbian side, from the side of aggressive nationalism", according to the minister.

He warned against confusing the "solidarity of Russian and Serbian nationalists" with the position of the Russian Government.

Kozyrev added that "military intervention in Yugoslavia is not on the agenda. I do not know who is ready for such a turn of developments". The minister said that one should not resort only to power methods in solving the crisis as they yield little result and called to engage "in real politics".

The minister said Moscow attached great importance to the visit of Af Ugglas also as CSCE chairwoman. "The CSCE activities in the former Soviet Union should be aimed to avert a Yugoslavian scenario, to promote the development of peoples along the path of preserving the values and mechanisms of interaction of a civilised community", he said.

The Swedish foreign minister said that one of the goals of her visit was to inform the Russian leadership about the great concern of Sweden over the Yugoslavian developments. "I want to stress that the West is deeply shocked by the events and I believe it extremely important that this concern has been passed to you", she said, adding that she highly appreciates the Russian role in the implementation of CSCE programmes and tasks.

Most resolute steps are to be made to end the tragedy and secure peace in former Yugoslavia, she added.

Kozyrev and Af Ugglas highly assessed the state of bilateral relations. The Russian foreign minister said the relations are "excellent" while his Swedish counterpart said her country "is very satisfied with the current state of relations and cooperation with Russia."

Kozyrev Meets Bulgarian Premier, Supports UN Sanctions

OW1904132293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1314 GMT 19 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev made it obvious that Russia might back up the resolution of the United Nations Security Council on tighter sanctions against the new Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) when the document came into force on April 26.

Answering a question put by INTERFAX after his meeting with Bulgarian Prime Minister Lyuben Berov in Moscow on Monday [19 April], Kozyrev said, "Unless the remaining days are used (by the Bosnian Serbs and Belgrade - IF [INTERFAX]) correctly, Yugoslavia will have to deal with tighter sanctions in practice." The foreign minister made the statement after Berov had said Bulgaria supported the resolution. Bulgaria was against the use of armed force for settling the conflict, the prime minister said, but was in favor of stricter sanctions against Yugoslavia.

Kozyrev said Russia and Bulgaria on the whole held identical positions on anti-Yugoslav sanctions.

Commenting on the Security Council's resolution at a news conference in Moscow on Monday, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Vitaly Churkin said "Russia has its own political priorities" and "should not and will not have any confrontation with the international community" because the Bosnian Serbs reject the Vance-Owen plan.

At the same time, he criticized the world community for a decision which, he thought, was too hasty.

By threatening only one party in the conflict, the international community would inevitably encourage the other parties to continue bloodshed in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Churkin said.

He said the Bosnian Serbs should make a "dramatic but the only possible decision," namely sign the Vance-Owen plan. The Serbs should formulate their minimum demands for the alteration of the map of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which could and should be changed, he said.

Churkin Comments on Belgrade Talks, Sanctions

Assurances on Srebrenica

LD1704170093 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1522 GMT 17 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Apr—The situation regarding Srebrenica was discussed in a most thorough fashion during talks with Serbian leaders Cosic, Milosevic, and Karadzic, and I got the impression that they clearly hold the view that the fall of this town would have most serious consequences for the Serbian side, Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Vitaliy Churkin said today in an exclusive interview with an ITAR-TASS correspondent. He has been taking part in a series of talks in Belgrade, New York, and Washington.

I was given assurances that the Serbs do not intend to take Srebrenica. An agreement on bringing a subunit of UN forces (a Canadian subunit of up to 150 men) into the town was reached on Friday [16 April], and that this operation is currently being carried out. Thus, if this happens, the situation there will become much less tense. Churkin thinks that the situation in Srebrenica "is at a stage when things are being rectified, but we must show a certain amount of caution here."

In our talks in Belgrade, the Russian side attempted to persuade the Serbian side to adopt the well-known Vance-Owen plan, and sought to find possibilities for the Serbians to formulate their own "minimum proposals for altering the map," and we gained the impression that "they will be ready in the very near future to submit such proposals to the co-chairmen."

At present, the deputy minister said, not all the sides are ready to begin talking again about the map dividing up Bosnia-Hercegovina. Naturally, the co-chairmen themselves would prefer it if the Bosnian Serbs were to approve it too, now that the Muslims and Croatians have done so.

"Our hopes and our requests," V. Churkin stressed, "are that this last chance will be used; otherwise there will be most serious consequences both for Bosnia and, on a wider scale, for the former Yugoslavia and the Balkans as a whole. We have tried to do everything in order to prevent a more dramatic development of events in the region."

Speaking about the discussion due to be held by the Security Council on 26 April on tightening the sanctions against the present Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the deputy minister expressed the opinion that the resolution would be adopted. Russia has exhausted its possibilities in this area: it has twice obtained a postponement of a vote on this resolution. "I assume that unless there is a positive breakthrough in the negotiations, this resolution will be adopted—there will be no avoiding it," V. Churkin stressed. "I would even go so far as to say that if suddenly the resolution were not adopted and the situation remained unchanged, the world... [incomplete sentence as received]

Opposes New Sanctions

LD1804162893 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1350 GMT 18 Apr 93

[From the "Panorama" program]

[Text] The former Yugoslavia continues to bleed from its wounds. Fighting in Bosnia has worsened. People have been killed in Srebrenica. Lord Owen, co-chairman of the coordinating council of the London conference for the settlement of the situation in Yugoslavia, has called for air strikes to be carried out against Bosnian Serb positions.

Vitaliy Churkin, special representative of the Russian president and a colleague of the British diplomat, still believes there can be a peaceful solution to the Bosnian crisis. He is making shuttle flights between Washington, New York, and Belgrade, trying to save the Vance-Owen plan and win peace for Bosnia-Hercegovina. Our correspondent Vladimir Solovyev had a conversation with him in Belgrade.

[Begin recording] [Churkin] Through incredible efforts, our diplomats have succeeded in postponing for some time, probably for two weeks, a vote by the UN Security Council on a resolution on the adoption of new sanctions against Yugoslavia. That gives us some time to try to bring about a settlement in Bosnia-Hercegovina.

I am convinced that the introduction of new sanctions would, apart from everything else, aggravate the general situation. It would effectively mean that all diplomatic and political efforts have failed, and that we could expect a sharp worsening of the situation with unpredictable—well, at least the only thing we could predict, very difficult consequences for the Balkans and perhaps for the whole of Europe. I hope we manage to prevent that.

[Solovyev] Tell me, could the Vance-Owen plan be amended so that Bosnia and Herzegovina are divided not into 10 provinces, but into three separate parts?

[Churkin] I don't think one should now expect such a radical alteration of the map in the Vance-Owen plan. Nevertheless, within the framework of that plan and of the map of Bosnia which the co-chairmen have drawn up, in my view solutions could be found, although with extreme difficulty, which should ultimately, proceeding from historic interests, satisfy the Serbs, the Serbian people, and should be acceptable to Muslims and Croatians, and should therefore be acceptable to the co-chairmen who have drawn up the plan.

[Solovyev] But have there been changes for the better?

[Churkin] I would not like to talk about any changes for the better. The possibility remains that a settlement may still be reached. The Serbs will have to show courage, they will have to show goodwill, and make certain decisions which may seem to them at first sight to be unacceptable or not entirely acceptable. On the other hand, the Muslims, the Croats, the co-chairmen, and the international community must understand that there cannot be any peaceful and lasting settlement in Bosnia if account is not taken of the basic and fundamental needs of the Serbian people. [end recording]

Concern Over Calls for Strikes

LD1904125593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1232 GMT 19 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Staroselskiy]

[Text] Moscow April 19 TASS—Russia is concerned over a "militarised" approach of the world community towards Yugoslavian developments when "leading diplomats give instructions for delivering strikes in eastern Bosnia", according to Russian deputy foreign minister.

"The world community has to decide how it wants to act: Whether it wants to wage a war in the Balkans or put the main emphasis on a political settlement", Vitaliy Churkin said at a press conference on Monday.

He warned that inertia can make the world community "dizzy from success" and "in the process of solving the Bosnian and Yugoslavian crises we can find ourselves in a situation which nobody of us wants". A cataclysm in the Balkans may trigger unpredictable consequences and "as a result we shall see no Europe which we are getting used to and to the construction of which we paid so much time and effort", Churkin said.

The Russian presidential envoy to former Yugoslavia is concerned by certain hastiness in international efforts aimed to solve the crisis there. "If it goes like this, then it is possible to adopt another two-three resolutions in the coming days, but all of them will not benefit the political settlement", he stressed.

The fact that Russia abstained in a vote on two UN Security Council resolutions on the problem does not mean that it wants to abandon the efforts of the world community in solving the crisis in Yugoslavia. "I can definitely state that this is not so", Churkin said.

However, he added that Russia will continue to express its definite and resolute opinion on the settlement issues which it believes necessary to express.

"Russia intends to continue its active participation in the Yugoslavian settlement and will advocate its positions and approaches which it believes are just, rational, justified and most efficient", Churkin stressed.

Serbs have to look for ways of preserving themselves as a "single and viable nation, although it may live outside the boundaries of one state", he said, adding that this is more important than to determine where the borders of a Serbian, Muslim or Croation province may go in Bosnia.

If the Serbs realise that "they can find political power and political courage to adopt those decisions which are the only acceptable ones for them in the current political reality, excluding those which lead to an escalation of the conflict and, in the final end, to a national catastrophe," Churkin said.

Churkin said that chances for a political settlement in former Yugoslavia decrease. He called on the world community to give a "balanced, objective and adequate" assessment of developments there and asked the Serbs to refrain from "rash actions".

"The chances to reach a political settlement in former Yugoslavia in the coming days have somewhat decreased. There were more of them on Friday than on Monday", he said.

He resolutely called on the Serbs to "refrain from rash actions in the given situation" and continue contacts with international institutions. He recalled that nine days still remain until the latest UN resolutions come into force and said that sanctions do not mean "the end of the world".

"It is necessary to strictly determine positions at negotiations, achieve a peaceful settlement and introduce certain corrections to the Vance-Owen plan, join the plan, stop the war in Bosnia and switch from the regime of confrontation to that of peace", according to Churkin.

The world community, in its turn, should refrain from actions aimed against only one party in the conflict. "If we continue to call on only one party to cease combat activities, if we threaten grave consequences to only one party, this will move other parties in the Bosnian conflict to continue the bloodshed", he said.

Churkin regretted that the vote on additional sanctions against Yugoslavia in the Security Council was not postponed until April 26.

He said talks had been held of late with co-chairs of the international conference on former Yugoslavia, with representaives of the U.S. Administration and of other countries which resulted in a "relatively broad understanding regarding additional negotiations on the map and other aspects of the Vance-Owen plan which the Serbs have not joined yet".

Although the talks were held on the unfavourable background of continuing fighting in eastern Bosnia, "we, nevertheless, do not believe that the initiators of the vote in the Security Council on the resolution providing for additional sanctions against Yugoslavia fully observed the reached agreement to postpone the vote until April 26", Churkin stressed.

Against Lifting of Arms Embargo

OW1904153993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1528 GMT 19 Apr 93

[Report by diplomatic correspondents Andrey Borodin, Igor Porshnev, and Dimitriy Voskoboynikov; from the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister, Vitaliy Churkin, has said that "Russia has its own political priorities", and it "must not, and will not, enter into confrontation with the world community over Bosnian Serbs' unwillingness to accept the plan of the international mediators, Vance and Owen. This is how he commented at Monday's [19 April] news conference in Moscow on the resolution issued by the U.N. Security Council to toughen sanctions against Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) as of April 26.

Nevertheless, Churkin said, the world community was too hasty, when resolving this issue. "The opportunities to reach a political settlement in Bosnia-Hercegovina have somewhat decreased. On Friday they were greater than they are on Monday," he said.

The Security Council's resolution on toughening sanctions against Belgrade might have "an effect contrary to the expected one", the diplomat said.

According to Churkin, when Russia insisted on delaying the voting on the anti-Yugoslav resolution at the Security Council, it was not guided largely by domestic policy considerations. However in that and other cases Moscow could not completely disengage itself from the situation within the country.

Russia's attitude to the possibility of lifting the embargo on arms supplies to Bosnia-Hercegovina is "extremely negative", the deputy foreign minister said. "Many other members of the international community share this attitude," he added.

In answer to a question from Interfax's correspondent he said that Moscow makes a difference between Bosnian Serbs and Serbia. Russia believes that a civil war is raging in Bosnia, but not everyone agrees with this, he said. According to Churkin, the world community is inclined to believe that Serbia is carrying on an aggression in Bosnia, and that without Belgrade's support Bosnian Serbs would not have been able to wage their armed struggle.

Russia's deputy foreign minister urged Bosnian Serbs to take "a dramatic, but the only possible decision", accept the map of Bosnia-Hercegovina, sign the Vance-Owen plan. The Serbs, he said, must formulate their minimal demands for changing the map of Bosnia-Hercegovina's division, which, according to Churkin, can and must be altered. "Blue helmets" from Russia who enjoy the Serbs' trust can be dispatched to the corridors, which would link Serbia with the Serb-populated provinces in Bosnia-Hercegovina that would be under U.N. control, he said.

Opposition Accuses NATO of 'Agression' Against Serbs

OW1604172293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1453 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Report by diplomatic correspondents Andrey Borodin, Igor Porshnev, and Dimitriy Voskoboynikov; from the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The political council of the opposition National Salvation Front has released a statement accusing NATO of what they describe as "armed provocation" against the peoples of Yugoslavia and demanding an immediate end to the "aggression".

Today there is neither a "Communist empire" nor the Warsaw Pact, against which NATO was created for protection purposes, says the document. Nevertheless, the North Atlantic Alliance, the Front said, "continues to arm itself, spill blood in the Middle East (Iraq) and incite tension in Europe." The patrol by NATO planes of the Bosnian air space (according to the UN Security Council resolution on the "no-fly" zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina—IF [INTERFAX]) is described in the statement as "intervention".

The statement ends with a "hands off the peoples of Yugoslavia" appeal.

Official Reacts to Front Statement

OW1604172393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1453 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Report by diplomatic correspondents Andrey Borodin, Igor Porshnev, and Dimitriy Voskoboynikov; from the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "In pursuing its internal political and party goals, our Russian 'patriots' are prepared to fight to the end." Such was the comment made to Interfax on the Front's Political Council statement by a high-ranking Russian foreign policy official.

He believes such Moscow statements cause "false illusions" among the Serbs. The Russians and Serbs are really very close spiritually and culturally, which does not mean that Moscow will support any step taken by the Serbs, said the diplomat.

He said that it is in the interests of the Serbs themselves to sign the Vance-Owen plan on settlement in Bosnia-Hercegovina before the UN Security Council considers stepping up sanctions against Belgrade.

Deputy Opposes Tougher UN Sanctions Against Serbia

OW1904135293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1315 GMT 19 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The chairman of the Russian parliament's committee on defence and security Sergey Stepashin has called "premature" the UN decision to toughen economic sanctions against Serbia. He noted in an interview with Interfax that it was hard to determine today who was more to blame for the conflict in the Balkans, Serbia or Croatia. Since the escalation of the fighting in the region, especially in March-April, has been stemming not only from Serbia but also from Croatia, sanctions should be applied to both of them, Stepashin stressed.

In his opinion, "the one-sided application of sanctions could adversely affect the situation in Serbia itself and could inspire the political and military leadership to further escalation." Stepashin said that "a rather tough position taken by President Yeltsin, Foreign Minister Kozyrev, and his deputy Churkin has made it possible to stabilize to a certain extent the situation in former Yugoslavia, Serbia included." At the same time, he stressed, "the UN resolution could only pour more oil on the fire". Stepashin spoke favorably of the position of the Russian Federation, which, alongside China, had abstained from voting in the United Nations on a proposal to toughen sanctions against Serbia.

"The innocent civilians who are on the brink of starvation should be spared the responsibility for what politicians are doing," the Russian lawmaker stressed. He voiced hope that "President Clinton's reasonable stance will preclude direct military involvement by NATO and especially by the U.S. in the armed conflict in the Balkans."

Commentator Views Foreign Policy Options in Bosnia

LD1704154793 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1230 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Excerpts] [Announcer] The capture of the town of Srebrenica by Bosnian Serbs, reported by the AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, introduces a new turn in the solution of the issue of Bosnia-Hercegovina—this is what our international affairs commentator Viktor Anikin thinks. Your arguments, please:

[Anikin] Thank you. First of all, the downfall of Srebrenica will cause the position of the West toward the Serbian side to become tougher. Strictly speaking, it is already happening. [passage omitted]

[Announcer] How will the developments in Bosnia influence Russia's position?

[Anikin] Undoubtedly in a most painful way, I would say. Russian diplomacy has found itself in a rather ambiguous situation in the Yugoslav issue. Unfortunately, expectations connected with Deputy Foreign Minister Vitaliy Churkin's mission to Yugoslavia have not come true. It has finished to no effect. And at present the countries of former Yugoslavia are being visited by a delegation of deputies of the Russian Supreme Soviet.

The conclusions drawn by this delegation will without any shadow of doubt be dictated by Slav solidarity. And this solidarity will be demonstrated on the eve of the Russian referendum which, as is known, has become a reason for the postponement of the Security Council meeting on the Bosnia-Hercegovina issue until 26 April. And on that day Moscow will find itself facing a painful choice: either to support the toughening of sanctions against the Serbs or to use the right of veto and create a precedent of discord which has not been observed in the Security Council lately.

There is a third choice, though: to abstain during voting. But given Russia's active role in Yugoslavia, this means the admission of powerlessness.

Kozyrev, Fedorov Return From G-7 Meeting in Tokyo

LD1604175793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1659 GMT 16 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Igor shubin]

[Text] Moscow April 16 TASS—Russian Vice-Premier Boris Fedorov and Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev returned home from Tokyo today after taking part in the meeting in Tokyo of the foreign and finance ministers of the Group of Seven leading industrial countries on aid to Russia.

The meeting in Tokyo approved an aid package worth 43.4 billion dollars intended to assist Russia in economic reforms and give support to Yeltsin's reform policy.

During his stay in Tokyo Andrey Kozyrev met with Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa and held talks with his opposite number Kabun Muto to discuss preparations for Russian President Boris Yeltsin's forthcoming visit to Japan. It was agreed that the visit would take place in May.

Kozyrev Comments on Results

OW1604191293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1859 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A new stage has been reached in the build up to Russian President Boris Yeltsin's visit to Japan, when "specific positions will be revealed", Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrey Kozyrev, said in an exclusive Interfax interview on his return from Tokyo.

There has already been "a significant closing" of positions between the two sides on Yeltsin's visit, said Kozyrev. However, added the foreign minister, diplomatic channels would have to be used to move from "a general understanding of the overall path to specific milestones." After that, said the minister, "I'm sure the president will be able to make a decision."

Kozyrev did not rule out a working visit to Moscow by Japanese Foreign Minister Kobun Muto in May, since Yeltsin's Japan visit may go ahead a month later. "However," repeated the minister, "meanwhile we need a stage when diplomatic channels can thrash out those details, which will allow us to take a final decision." Speaking on the G-7 decision to grant Russia a $43.4 Bn [billion] reform support package, the minister added "that really is slightly more than expected." "On the other hand," noted Kozyrev, "those figures don't really mean anything." The "cooperation package's" main significance was not so much in its size, but in its approach, which united the efforts of Russia and the world's seven most industrially developed countries.

Earlier we expressed our needs, and then the West offered what it could, explained the minister. As a result there appeared "a gap between our needs and their proposals." The new situation, said Kozyrev, could be compared to two head on streams" [quotation marks as received] which must merge. "We must now work on the merging of those two programs," the minister underlined.

Kozyrev gave particular significance to the text of the Tokyo summit communique, which for the first time contained principles, giving a state recipient of aid "favorable and equal conditions for competition on world markets." "That is exactly what we wanted," Kozyrev explained, "and that, to a certain extent, is exactly what exceeded all our expectations."

Fedorov Welcomes Aid

LD1604155893 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1110 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Russia's Vice Premier and Finance Minister Boris Fedorov has described as an essential step forward the decision adopted by the G-7 ministers in Tokyo to give Russia more than $43 billion worth of aid. In an interview with ITAR-TASS news agency, Mr. Fedorov said practically all the assistance measures proposed by Russia had been approved in order that a noble job had been done which should be continued.

According to the vice premier the next issue on the agenda is working out a concrete mechanism to realize this aid. Without this mechanism it will be impossible to implement the adopted decisions. That's why the Russian delegation at the meeting was offered to set up joint working groups of G-7 and Russian experts to deal with concrete avenues of assistance.

Though an ultimate decision on creating these groups is yet to be passed, agreement has been reached to continue consultations on the realization of the program of aid to Moscow announced by the West. Mr. Fedorov said the effectiveness of the world community's aid to reforms depended first of all on Russia itself and not on how successful the mechanism to realise this aid would prove. Without internal efforts, all aid would be useless, he said; 90 percent of the success in the implementation of the Western aid program depends on Russia's activity on whether it will manage to create conditions needed for the reception of the aid, Mr. Fedorov said.

He also said the meeting had not endorsed the Russian idea of an international fund of assistance to reforms assessed positively by the United Nations and embodied, though in a slightly different form, in Washington's iniative to set up a multilateral $4 billion fund to assist privatization in Russia.

At the same time the vice premier expressed his satisfaction that another idea had been passed concerning financial help to enterprises in concrete industrial branches. A decision was made to form a working group to prepare projects to be realized in this domain by the G-7 Tokyo summit. According to Mr. Fedorov, one of the most positive moments of the meeting was the desire of the G-7 ministers to take into consideration Moscow's opinion that Western aid to Russia be closely tied to the carrying out of reforms so that every Russian could see its results.

Touching on the political side of the forum, the vice premier described as evident the fact that it was no chance that the G-7 states had held a meeting and came out unequivocally in support of Boris Yeltsin on the eve of the 25th April referendum in Russia. He said in case of an extremely negative outcome at the referendum followed by a change in Russia's political course, the West would undoubtedly curtail its assistance program.

Britain Announces Aid To Support Economic Reform

LD1604213393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1825 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Moscow April 16 TASS—The British Embassy in Moscow drew ITAR-TASS attention to Britain's announcement of extra 600 million dollar support for Russia and the former Soviet Union. The extra 600 million dollar (380 million pounds) package of UK support for economic reform in Russia and the other countries of the former Soviet Union includes:

—an extra 320 million pounds sterling (500 million dollars) will be available for export credits and for investment insurance. This helps British companies wishing to export to Russia and the other countries of the former Soviet Union and those wanting to invest directly there;

—technical assistance for Russia will be doubled, increasing from 60 million pounds sterling (93 million dollars) to 120 million pounds sterling (186 million dollars);

—Britain will be making a contribution to a new international fund to boost the small business sector in Russia;

—the chancellor's secondees scheme will be extended, to allow more Russian managers and companies to benefit and learn the skills required to run a market economy.

The chancellor also urged the G-7 and community countries, represented at the meeting in Tokyo, to establish the clear goal of giving Russia completely free access to the markets of the West within ten years.

Commenting on the package, Chancellor of the Exchequer Norman Lamont said:

"This new package of support will be of great practical help, both for the development of the market economy in Russia, and for British businesses wanting to start trading there. It brings to over one billion pounds the total support the UK has committed to Russia's far-reaching programme of economic reform.

"As well as playing our full part in giving balance of payments support to the Russians through the Paris Club rescheduling, the IMF, and the World Bank, we have always stressed the need to support the practical business of reforming the Russian economy, through privatisation, the growth of small business, and the development of the financial sector. Russia could be one the biggest export markets for British firms in the next decade. We want to help and encourage them to get in on the ground floor, and to establish links with Russia at an early stage.

"As well as giving financial and technical support, we need to give the Russians the chance to expand their trade with us. That means breaking down the barriersthat stand in the way. We have been urging our international partners today, for the first time, to set the specific goal of completely free trade within ten years".

Political Issues

Further on Congress of Industrialists, Entrepreneurs

Yeltsin Address to Industrialists

LD1604222793 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1953 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Address by President Boris Yeltsin to the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs in Moscow on 16 April—recorded]

[Text] The greatness of a country is not determined by the volume of its pronouncements or the intricacy of its political demagogy, but by the efficiency of its industry, the level of its technology, and its ability to compete with overseas producers. I know that people with an interest in political and economic stability have gathered at the Congress. Without that, there can be no normal production rhythm, no normal work by your workforces and by you yourselves. I consider the reestablishment of stability in the country to be my main task this year. I will say more: stability in the name of continuing reforms, in the name of letting them take place more rationally, more progressively, and with more results. In the second year of transformations this task has become a realistic one. The country has already begun the difficult transition to its normal condition. We understand much better today the scale and depth and difficulty of such a transition. The ideology of the transition is only being established. Life is springing surprise after surprise on us.

Completely new situations keep arising. Under these conditions we have not only to change tactics but also to correct various facets of strategy. This is an inevitable condition of introducing reform. If we are to determine the fundamental direction of these corrections, we can say unconditionally that it is a movement toward common sense, or in political terms, to a more balanced systemic position. In this context we are not talking about changing priorities. Tactical flexibility is the essential condition for implementing them. We had to act decisively in the beginning, otherwise we would not have been able to break the back of the situation at the first stage.

Further: society and the population were not ready, but insistently demanded decisive measures. You and I have an interest in a modern competitive economy being established in Russia, so our country can take a dignified place in the world market and the world community. We have an interest in the severe illness of dependency and infantilism which has unfortunately put down roots deep into our society being overcome as soon as possible. I was told in this hall that until we start working properly we will remain in poverty. But plenty of healthy, strong and capable people are still waiting for manna from heaven from the state to this day. You and I are brought together by the fact that each of us in our own place is taking part in tackling the everyday problems of today. Neither political demagogy nor cheap propaganda nor political intrigue is capable of halting the objective rapprochement between executive authority and industrialists and entrepreneurs—this rapprochement between executive authority and industrialists and entrepreneurs has now announced itself patently, and it is happening.

I think you will be able to see what the difference is between some political groupings and the interests of Russia and its people, as a whole. The most important task of the transitional period is the improvement of the country's economy. We would like the Russian economy to exist and to develop by means of the maximum saturation of the market in the interests of the consumer and by means of competition for consumers' demand between producers. This is a strategic goal, and objectively speaking, we have only just started to implement it. Therefore, the most important task is to form qualitatively new relations between the state and the economy. I am certain that we will manage to create a competitive and socially-orientated market if we put an end to the diktat of a military bureaucratic state in the economy.

Therefore, the following problems are coming to the fore: the speediest transfer of state enterprises to work in market economy conditions, the accelerated development and improvement of the state's economic and financial levers and significant change in the distribution of the country's overall taxes in favor of local bodies, as well as the introduction of measures aimed at restraining inflation and overcoming the budget deficit. I must say here that the issue of mutual debt has not been resolved yet. Unfortunately, it takes 120 days for a transaction between enterprises. What measures are currently being taken? Well, some urgent measures which will have only a slight effect but still. The entire accounting network of the Central Bank is to work seven days a week. Second, a mechanism for organizing the production, installation and in the future the improvement of the automated accounting system has been launched. We think that this automated accounting system could be installed and launched somewhere around the third quarter of the year, if we join our efforts. Then we could hope that the system will work since it will not depend upon an individual and it will take literally several days for it to process transactions between enterprises. The task of ridding the economy of criminal elements is of particular importance.

It is indisputable that the export of licences and quotas is clearly profitable to those who take and those who give bribes. But Russia suffers only losses from this. The atmosphere of criminality is stifling private business now. The enterprises of Russia should have the right to sell freely their products and to buy the necessary raw materials and equipment abroad. Enterprises have the right to dispose independently of their incomes regardless of where their products have been sold—in Russia or abroad.

The appropriate laws are vital for a civilized, dynamic market. These are: laws of ownership, joint-stock societies, a new civil code, and others.

I do not think that presidential decrees are the best way to close the gaps in legislation but I am still forced to continue this practice as long as the need for it exists.

Finally, with respect to the referendum. I do not think that I need to explain to you the essence of it. You are practical people and understand what is behind the referendum. I am sure that the citizens of Russia will display wisdom. I sure that we will vote in the referendum for civil peace, for accord, for stability, for the revival of Russia. In Russia now, there aren't any people who would give back the property which they have acquired, or the individual farms and freedom which they have acquired, the comprehension of matters which they have acquired, or who would take up voluntarily the yoke of diktat. All business people are united in this. The rest is professionalism, competence, far-sightedness, honesty—the authorities demand that of business managers; business managers demand that of the authorities, the people demands that of all of us. Thank you.

Chernomyrdin on State Control of Economy

LD1604162393 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1400 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] The Congress of the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs which opened in Moscow today has become a big event in the economic life of Russia. We have already reported on some aspects of Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's and Arkadiy Volskiy's speeches at the Congress. Now I would like to dwell on some statements by Viktor Chernomyrdin. He believes that at the present time the state should have more influence on the economy and above all, on the sphere of the material production. According to him this is the essence of the correction of reforms. He said that the main result of the (?latest) activity of the government is that the (?main) members of the government became more pragmatic and had more common sense. For us the period of the romanticism of reforms is already over, the premier said.

Chernomyrdin: Economy in 'Stagnation'

LD1604185893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1751 GMT 16 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Podyapolskiy]

[Text] Moscow April 16 TASS—The current correction of reforms aims to enhance state influence on the economy, primarily the production sphere, Russian Government Chairman Viktor Chernomyrdin told a Congress of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs here today.

He described as the major result of the government's first 100 days the fact "the cabinet head and members grew more pragmatic and wise. We have passed a period of reform romanticism".

In the opinion of Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Russian economy is currently in "crisis stagnation". Despite "certain stabilization signs in specific branches", negative processes are underway in the economy and one can hardly speak of actual stabilization, he stressed.

The non-payment problem remains acute. The debit indebtedness of industrial and construction enterprises amounted to almost six trillion roubles and the credit indebtedness—3.8 trillions on March 1.

Speaking of relations with the Commonwealth states, the Russian premier noted last year almost six trillion roubles worth of interest-free credits were issued to the former Soviet Republics. He said they receive practically no payments and added further issuance of credits to Commonwealth states will be done only on condition of inter-state agreements.

The credits will be issued with an interest rate, same as Russia takes on credits from foreign states.

Saying efforts to reform the Russian economy are so far unsuccessful due to the imperfect state power mechanism, Chernomyrdin called on deputies to contribute to the efficient holding of the referendum.

Rutskoy Cited on Resignation

LD1604143493 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1402 GMT 16 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Podyapolskiy]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Apr—"I have been loyal to the president and remain so. As for my assessment of the situation in the country, I have always described things as they are. What can I do if that is how I am," Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy told journalists today at the Congress of Russia's Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs.

Commenting on calls for him to make up his mind about what his position is, Aleksandr Rutskoy declared: "I do not need to make up my mind. I have always held to one position."

Asked about the possibility of his resignation, the vice president declared that he and the president were elected by the people on the same ticket. "Neither the president nor any state body can dismiss me. The people must express their view of my personal qualities, but I have not yet heard the people calling for me to resign," Aleksandr Rutskoy said.

Volskiy Cited on Reforms

LD1604170893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1458 GMT 16 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oleg Deyneka]

[Text] Moscow April 16 TASS—"The Russian economy landed in a deep crisis in 1992, which was accompanied by inflation and an unprecedented peacetime decline of the population's living standards," Arkadiy Volskiy, president of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Businessmen, told the union's congress here today.

"In spite of all our difficulties, we have avoided wholesale bankruptcies and unemployment, which were predicted by some people," Volskiy noted. "Nevertheless, the economy could have suffered much less if the reforms were carried out by professionals and not romantics, who introduce radical revolutionary intolerance into everything and everywhere".

Volskiy stressed that the gross domestic product dropped by 19 per cent in 1992 as compared to the previous year. The volume of investments has decreased by 45 per cent during the same period, the slump of industrial production amounted to 19 per cent, labour productivity dropped by 22 per cent, and the volume of retail trade—by 39 per cent. A considerable part of the population can no longer afford to buy many goods and to pay for many services. Money was being actively pumped out of Russia. The volume of Western investments is extremely small.

Dwelling on possible ways to pull the economy out of the crisis, Volskiy pointed to the need of quickly curbing inflation and stimulating production by means of balanced market prices. He said that the task of Russian industrialists and businessmen was to protect the interests of producers: to prevent the authorities from adopting decisions that contradict the interests of businessmen, industrialists and work collectives. "Present at the congress," he stressed, "are not people opposed to the reforms, but people who support them and feel their responsibility to the country and the people".

Volskiy believes that the main drawback of Chernomyrdin's government is that it lacks a tried and tested concept for economic reforms. "Nevertheless, the economic situation has on the whole improved after his appointment to head the Cabinet of Ministers," Volskiy noted. A most favoured treatment regime should be ensured to the government for one year, Volskiy believes. It is precisely this composition of the Cabinet of Ministers that is to play the key role in the effort to stabilise the economic situation. It must bear full responsibility for this, he added.

Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, who attended the congress, told ITAR-TASS that he disagreed with Volskiy's claim that the cabinet had no comprehensive concept for economic reforms.

Volskiy Opposes 'Economic Blitzkrieg'

OW1604174393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1725 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President of the Russian Union of Manufacturers and Entrepreneurs Arkadiy Volskiy told his union's congress on Friday [16 April] that a real transition to market relations was unthinkable without due account taken of Russia's history long-established economic mechanism. He also said that favorable conditions should be created for the new economic entities without destroying the public sector, and that the replacement of the old administrative system should be gradual. He said that an "economic blitzkrieg" could not be applied to Russia and that well-tested methods of state regulation, preferably economic regulation, should be used.

The country's slide-down to hyperinflation is number one problem, said Volskiy. He also noted that Russia could not endure a rate of inflation exceeding 30-40% a month. He stated in this connection that the Central Bank of Russia should not be subordinated to anyone and criticized the open discussion of this issue between the Central Bank's Chairman Viktor Gerashchenko and Vice-Premier Boris Fedorov.

He said that he opposed permanent changes in the tax and export and import policies, that Russia still ranked first in many spheres and that industrial priorities should be defined.

Volskiy said that Russia's national currency must be protected and reminded Boris Yeltsin, who attended the congress, that a year before, he had passed a decree abolishing the circulation of foreign currencies in Russia. In view of this, Volskiy proposed that the president "sack" the government official who did not implement his decree.

He backed the idea of strengthening the economic union of Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus, and criticized Vice Premier Aleksandr Shokhin's recent statement to the effect that such a union did not benefit Russia.

He described the idea of shaping a coalition government as "empty fantasy". Such a government might be shaped only after elections, he said. Prior to them, a government of experts should be formed, he added. He also said that the appointment of Viktor Chernomyrdin to the post of prime minister would promote the dialogue between the Cabinet and the Union of Manufacturers and Entrepreneurs, and suggested that the Cabinet should be given every possible assistance and freedom.

Chubays on Rutskoy 16 Apr Speech to Parliament

OW1604174793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1725 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "Aleksandr Rutskoy's work and speeches did not intend to disclose criminals and bring them to book; they intended to create for him the political image of a man who does his best to fight corruption," said Russia's vice-premier Chubays at a press-briefing following the Russian vice-president's speech at the Friday [16 April] session of the Russian parliament. The speech assailed Chubays' State Committee for Public Property which is concerned with privatization issues.

The Russian parliament refused to let Chubays speak at the session.

According to the vice-premier, for Rutskoy this is "the last chance to save his political image after he betrayed the president and those who believed him during at the election."

Rutskoy's statement, said Chubays, mentioned a good deal of cases that had been investigated by the Russian procurator's office. What Rutskoy said about the privatization is, said Chubays, a combination of "facts, far-fetched interpretations of real facts, and barefaced lies." For example, when small transgressions (much spoken about by Rutskoy) were exposed by the State Committee for Public Property of Russia in connection with the privatization of the Nakhodka port, the State Committee repealed the privatization decisions and banned the sale of Nakhodka port stock.

The impression is, said Chubays, that Rutskoy is vice-president of a country other than Russia and his chief task is "to take a look at the situation from the sidelines, not do real business." The vice-premier suggested that the vice-president go to court because he said in parliament that he is able to prove Chubays' guilt in court. He, in turn, planned to scrutinize the transcript of Rutskoy's speech and sue Rutskoy for libel.

Asked about Chubays' possible dismissal, he said that the Supreme Soviet had not appointed him and that he would not discuss the issue with the Supreme Soviet.

Gaydar Comments on Rutskoy Speech

LD1904012893 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Recorded remarks by Presidential Economic Adviser Yegor Gaydar during an interview with an unidentified correspondent; place and date not given; from the "Itogi" program; broadcast in progress]

[Text] ...Vice President Rutskoy's speech at the Supreme Soviet. This was a subtle and well-conducted move by the opposition, by our opponents. It proves, of course, that we are not dealing with amateurs. We are dealing with people who are very good at planning a political campaign and who deal precise and well-targeted blows.

What is the essence of Rutskoy's speech? First. It is a well-known fact that there is fairly wide-spread corruption in the country. Everybody knows this. There is no point in denying it. Second. The president of this country is Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. Therefore, Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin and those close to him are responsible for this corruption.

It is almost impossible to argue against these points since they are easy to understand, and they are convincing. It is very difficult to think of a way to argue against them. Frankly speaking, this speech did not come as a surprise to me. Over the past year, I have had the opportunity to make quite close acquaintance with Aleksandr Vladimirovich Rutskoy, and I have learned that the exterior of the straightforward and gallant soldier conceals an uneasy and insecure soul.

If one were to ignore the form of all his speeches and get to the essence, one could usually find four points there. First. Everyone is in my way. Second. I am not to blame for anything. Third. I am not responsible for anything. Fourth. They misunderstand me. Then the vice president, naturally, first explains in detail who is in his way. Second, he cites all those rumors, gossip, and libelous complaints of which we all are so tired and which, unfortunately, have not been given any specific or legal form.

I recently saw a range of leaflets, prepared by the opposition against the president, which contain a remarkable premise. This is from an action guide: Do not get bogged down in legal details; the people do not understand them. I am under the impression that the vice president made very good use of this instruction. So, there is a stream of words. When one tries to single out this or that topic, one reaches the conclusion that it is some kind of nonsense.

Take gold, the gold reserve. The esteemed vice president—I am quoting the TASS version—says that last year, on my orders, first 31 tonnes of gold were sold, and later 25 tonnes more. Thus, the gold reserve continued to be squandered. Well, it was not difficult for Aleksandr Vladimirovich, as vice president, to find out that not 25 and 31 tonnes were sold last year, but 90 tonnes of gold. That was at the same time that 108 tonnes of gold were laid in reserve, and our gold reserve did not diminish but was increased for the first time in many years. It increased by 18 tonnes. Where are those approximately 1,000 tonnes of gold that were plundered by the previous regime, the representatives of whom he is kissing so vigorously today? That is a mystery that is still unsolved. This is absent in Aleksandr Vladimirovich's speech.

There are queer remarks that raw materials amounting to either $17 billion or $40 billion have been exported from the country without registration. Well, people that know the state of our transport system and the structure of our exports would know that, in order to do this, it would be necessary to lay down another export network of gas pipelines—evidently in secret—and to build two oil transshipment ports of Novorossiysk capacity.

It is the same for practically the whole speech—scraps of information, documents out of context. Nevertheless, the effect is achieved, beyond any doubt. In this connection, I would like to appeal to the vice president. It is understandable that the prefix vice is not at all pleasing. There is a great wish to get rid of it. Any means seem fair to achieve this. All the same, however, esteemed major general, do not lie.

Rutskoy Grants Interviews, Writes Articles

Denies Break With Yeltsin

OW1704104393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1036 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy, in an interview with INTERFAX, denied that he had broken with President Boris Yeltsin.

"I have always been fair to that man [Yeltsin]," he said. "But I have been, and will be, taking a negative attitude to his entourage. I expressly said at the Supreme Soviet session yesterday what it [Yeltsin's entourage] had been up to." Rutskoy was referring to his speech on organized crime in parliament on Friday [16 April], in which he criticized former State Secretary Gennadiy Burbulis, former acting Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar, and today's First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Shumeyko.

"Today the president's entourage continues to stir up tension and politicize society," Rutskoy said.

The vice president blamed Burbulis and "his successor" Shumeyko for his present conflict with Yeltsin. "[Deputy Prime Minister Sergey] Shakhray, as usual, provided a legal basis for those political intrigues," Rutskoy said.

Comments on Upcoming Referendum

LD1704174493 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1600 GMT 17 Apr 93

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Today many people have to think and make up their minds. Literally in the past few days, Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy finally made up his. Today he had another opportunity to state his position.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent V. Budnikov] Aleksandr Rutskoy came to the editorial office of KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA today. The newspaper invited the vice president to take part in a live phone-in to answer questions from Russian people. In 90 minutes he answered a variety of questions. The vice president was asked many times about his attitude to the current reforms.

[Rutskoy] Eighteen months ago I spoke out against the strategy and the tactics of the implementation of reform, and this is where I stand now. I have never changed this stance.

[Budnikov] In Rutskoy's opinion, the results of the referendum will make it possible to adjust the much too radical policy of the Russian leadership. Rutskoy repeatedly asserted that he is not going to resign.

[Rutskoy] Why should I resign, if I was elected together with the president?

[Budnikov] Rutskoy pointed out that he has been and still is loyal to the president, and the only thing that causes him annoyance is the fact that Yeltsin has succumbed to the influence of his entourage. The latter, in the vice president's view, is immoral and could not care less about the country's problems. [end recording]

Interviewed on Military

OW1904042493 Moscow Russian Television and Dubl Networks in Russian 2305 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Interview with Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given; from the "Aty Baty" program—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Aleksandr Vladimirovich, as a military man and one who is at the very pinnacle of the power pyramid, what are your views on the present condition of the Armed Forces and their combat readiness? How capable are they to really carry out the function for which the Armed Forces are intended?

[Rutskoy] Before we can talk about the combat readiness of the Armed Forces we need to look at the elements of combat readiness. The first and most important factor is combat spirit. A person's combat spirit and his capability to carry out combat tasks is a question of morale and, correspondingly, living conditions affect this. Everything else follows from that.

If we look at whether or not in the general sense we have an armed force today, taking all factors and elements of combat readiness as the basis, then we have to say that they are practically nonexistent. Heaven forbid any action from the opposing side. I am confident that there will be none, let us hope that I am right. It would be a horrible situation, a horrible situation. Why? Let us take a look.

The primary strategic defense boundary now lies in the Ukraine, Belarus, and the Baltics. Depots, combat supplies, NZ's [emergency supplies], and so on all remained there. You know that second and third line troops were usually based on Russian Federation territory, and consequently their arms too. The system of military districts, military garrisons, living conditions, and so on stem from this. That is why one simply cannot say unequivocally today that we are capable and that we have a high degree of combat readiness. Objectively we cannot say this.

[Correspondent] Why is it that in the past year, instead of improving and strengthening our Army, there has been a process of ever increasing oppression and waning prestige in the officers' service giving rise to more and more indignation among ordinary people and ordinary officers?

[Rutskoy] It would simply not be objective to place the entire blame on the present leadership of the Ministry of Defense.

The politicians are responsible for much of what has happened to our Army, primarily those politicians who brought about the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Everyone understands perfectly well that after the disintegration of the Soviet Union every one began dividing up the Armed Forces into national components. I will not cite any examples here because you know enough about them. Those who serve in the Armed Forces today can feel this for themselves. The serviceman, his family, his children and his wife, feel this.

People find themselves in unbearable living conditions and intolerable political conditions. The mechanism for the legal protection of these people is absent. Add to all of this the torrent of filth—it cannot be called anything else—heaped on the person who wears a uniform and officer's insignias. In other words, he has been made out to be some kind of criminal in our society.

All of this did not start today. It began in 1985 with Gorbachev's famous Congress speech, as you may recall, in which he called the Armed Forces a sinecure. What sinecure? One has to serve in them first, to try and find out how that pot of porridge is earned, and then say whether or not it is a sinecure. Of course, when a man has never served in the Army it is easy to argue from an outsider's point of view. One has to try this life first. As you know, I have come up from the ranks. I was a soldier for a year and a half and later I studied at military school. I lived in military surroundings; my father was an officer and he had three sons. My brother Volodya, the middle one, is a pilot and is currently serving at a command post in Germany. My youngest brother is serving in the militia. Up until just three years ago I also served in the Army, and now I am doing political work. [Interview is interrupted for another segment of the program the continues]

[Correspondent] We still do not have a military doctrine. We still do not have a military-technical doctrine.

[Rutskoy] Please understand that a military doctrine must be developed in conjunction with the military-technical doctrine, because our defense complex is also crumbling, by that I mean the VPK [military industrial complex] enterprises.

Incidentally, KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA today published the wage scale. The minimum wage is 4,000 rubles in the military industrial complex. Now this involves people with the highest qualifications and the highest level of training. It means scientifically advanced technologies. You can imagine how far we are dropping behind? Every month we drop behind exactly one year. [Interview is interrupted for another segment of the program then continues]

[Text] [Correspondent] This month I had an opportunity to visit many defense industry plants. They are continuing to operate, although some are involved in conversion and many have been converted entirely. But everywhere I went the directors of every plant shared one view, that they were in a state of uncertainty. In other words they did not know what they were supposed to be doing today, or what they will be doing in one year, five years or 10 years from now. Yet they are plant managers. I was told that there have been no orders this year for the MiG-29, that there are no...

[Rutskoy, interrupting] (?All) of our air forces are equipped with MiG-29's and SU-27's.

[Correspondent] Well I was...

[Rutskoy, interrupting] Of course I say that conditionally.

[Correspondent] What is your assessment of the conversion and which direction do you think the conversion should take?

[Rutskoy] If we talk about building new armed forces, if we talk about a Russian Army, and, moreover, if we have a technologically advanced military industrial complex, then we should probably bring our armed forces into line with it, so that they are capable of defending the state. You will agree that this is elementary. In other words there needs to be a long term military- technical policy, a military-technical policy on the basis of which an economic plan and a production plan can be worked out. That is, if we want to implement this doctrine and a military-technical policy in accord with this doctrine.

[Correspondent] So does it exist or not?

[Rutskoy] It does not. Neither one nor the other. There are versions. I was preparing my version and I know that Kokoshin, the deputy minister of defense, was preparing his. I know, too, that the Defense Council was preparing its own version. But no final version has been adopted. People simply cannot understand that all of this is linked to the military industrial complex. It involves enterprises, technology, and people who have families. It is a thoughtless attitude, an absence of a suitable procedure.

On the subject of conversion, there is also the concept of reconversion. I also visit enterprises and I simply cannot understand it when I see equipment designed to produce military goods thrown out into the street, thrown out to lie in the rain. [Interview is interrupted for another segment of the program then continues]

[Rutskoy continues] Production is simply disintegrating. We talk about U.S. assistance worth about 1.6 billion, but just take a look—we have been practically tossed out of all the markets. We do not need that 1.6 billion. We can earn it ourselves. Give us an opportunity to trade in the market in the normal fashion. We would not make 1.6 billion, we would make 106 billion, and we are capable of doing it.

When you see what is happening right before your very eyes while you sit back, serve your time, and sew more stars onto your uniform every week...[pauses] Just take a look at how many of them have been handed out recently. A frightening number of generals have been appointed. A person went from lieutenant colonel to lieutenant general in six months. Another from lieutenant colonel in a year to... [pauses] Take Kotenkov for instance, the great democrat, who in the space of half a year transformed himself from a political worker to a democrat and from a lieutenant colonel to a major general—in one year. Excuse me, but we ought to be sticking to some form of military service principle and sense of responsibility. I, too, could sew on all sorts of things. I could march around, click my heels, and say: Yes sir, no sir. I could have received the rank of colonel general by now in this position.

Writes on Present Problems, Solutions

PM1604155593 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Apr 93 Single Edition p 6

[Article by Vice President A. Rutskoy "delivered to the editorial office the previous day": "Aleksandr Rutskoy: People of Russia, Make Your Choice"]

[Text] I consider it my duty at this crucial moment to appeal to the citizens of Russia. The easiest thing for me would be to keep silent and sit it out on the sidelines since any result from the referendum could be turned to the vice president's advantage.

But I find such a stance unacceptable. It is supremely immoral to refrain from expressing your opinion and keep your head below the parapet when the bullets are flying and one of them could hit Russia right in the heart.

I want one thing: That we once again give thought to who we are and where we are and whether we can live the way we have been and are living, not changing the reality but only changing the color of the totalitarianism. We have reached the point where we must stop and give serious thought to where Russia is going. This is the question I find contained in the hundreds of letters I receive.

I appeal to all who are not indifferent to the fate of the State of Russia and the fate of the new generation of Russian citizens, to those who do not wish to live on humanitarian handouts and "pseudomarket wages," those who seek a normal life in a normal society. I hope that I have sympathizers who will convey these thoughts to people who are vacillating and do not understand what is happening to us and what will happen unless sense and reason triumph. The upcoming referendum is not merely a political act; it is more a moral act in which the people are being given the right to give their verdict democratically.

To many of you it may seem that the referendum is not of serious significance. Everyone is bored to death with the disputes between the so-called branches of power. And indeed they look pretty undignified against the backdrop of people's burdensome and often hopeless lives. But nevertheless I would ask you to overcome these feelings and participate in the vote because this will determine not only the immediate but also the comparatively remote future of the country.

I therefore urge you: Come and vote 25 April. Come despite all the disappointments of the last year and a half, which initially promised us so much; come despite the drumroll of single-note, single-party propaganda.

I realize it it difficult to get to grips with the nature of the conflict shaking the state. It is particularly difficult because the preparations for the referendum, as in Stalin's times, are being accompanied by lies and hypocrisy. Matters are being depicted as if we have reformers on one side and supporters of a communist restoration on the other. I, as you know, am put in the latter group. But take a close look at some simple facts: Who really flourished in the party nomenklatura, and who was sent to die in Afghanistan? Who are these people "thronging around the throne" who label people "red," "brown," or "enemies of reform" all over the place?

The speed and cynicism with which G. Burbulis, an ardent propagandist of Marxism-Leninism; O. Latsis, a member of the CPSU Central Committee and one of the leaders of the journal KOMMUNIST; G. Popov, an active champion of the socialist mode of production;; M. Poltoranin, an editor of party newspapers; Marxist academics G. Starovoytova and A. Sobchak; and prominent army political officer D. Volkogonov changed their colors to those of fighters for democracy and capitalism is astonishing. Don't be lazy—look at their speeches and writings from five or seven years back.

Several years ago now it was party activists of this very kind who expelled me from the party, and today, having rapidly turned their party coats into "democratic" jackets, they are again assailing and hounding independent and honest supporters of Russia's rebirth.

I don't think I need specially to prove that I am consistently against any extremism—on the part of both adherents of Stalinism and modern-style radicals.

The relentless propaganda is now being supplemented by new methods. The press has reported impoverished pensioners being given 1,000-ruble notes to participate in a progovernment rally. And now they are imposing a "referendum tax," which is now being levied on commercial structures in the center and the localities. We now know the rate of support for the regime set for each commercial bank—30 million rubles [R]. Fearing the results of the referendum vote, the ubiquitous [tot zhe] Mr. V. Shumeyko has announced in advance that "the referendum results are not important; what is important is the interpretation." It is not difficult to predict what this interpretation will mean: disbanding parliament or suspending its activity indefinitely.

He demonstrated a classic example of obkom [CPSU oblast committee] mentality when he sent all ministers, state committee chairmen, and government department heads Directive No. 0854 P.P.25, which states, in particular: "I instruct you to adopt by 15 April 1993 directive decisions, orders, and instructions ordering enterprises, establishments, and organization leaders... to ensure the participation of labor collective members in the referendum of 25 April this year... I request that you report in writing on the fulfillment of this order, attaching your own instructions on this matter."

Today there can and must be no indifferent people, no people who have lost faith, for any move toward indifference and lack of faith will only exacerbate the situation. The country is in a condition in which political passions and emotions have developed into overt confrontation, calling to mind scenes from movies shot in 1917. Society, which only recently seemed united by the desire to break with the totalitarian past and attain the level of a democratic and civilized system, a civil peace, has instead has begun a slide toward the brink of the abyss, toward "democratic" dictatorship or civil war.

The Most Important Thing Is the Choice of Reform Strategy

You have four questions to vote on. But single-party propaganda is trying to distort the essence of the conflict. But it cannot do so for the choice that you have to make. It is untrue that it is a matter of a choice between the institution of the president and parliament, still less between the personality of the president and the chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet. Personality problems are resolved not via a referendum, but in free elections with multiple candidates and on the basis of an extensive campaign making it possible to compare the contenders' programs and individual qualities.

So, I repeat, the main question in the referendum is not a choice between presidential and parliamentary power. The main point on which the opinion of the whole people is in fact required is the assessment of the present policy in the economy and social life, which is reflected in question two in the referendum. You will have to say whether you approve or reject the policy of a great leap into the market and shock therapy, which, according to the scheme of its organizers, is supposed to lead rapidly to a transition from a planned economy to a capitalist economy. The answer to this question predetermines the answers to the other three questions. For this is the center of the real struggle that has unfolded recently both inside parliament, inside the government, and inside the president's entourage.

A critical moment has now arrived—the blanket privatization of state property. If you say "yes" to this question, you will be approving a policy that will shortly place all the people's wealth, all our plants and factories, and the land and its mineral resources in the hands of traders, corrupt bureaucrats, and foreign capital. While what the people will get will be unemployment, poverty, destitution, and total dependence on get-rich-quick merchants. Your "yes" would at the same time signify a choice of political system—the replacement of democratic institutions, above all the newly emerged parliament and local self-government, by a one-man dictatorship reflecting the interests of the newfound millionaires. If you say "no," a quest for a sensible, phased transition to the market will begin.

Two positions, two strategies of economic reform have emerged. The first is to continue along the path of shock therapy and blanket privatization; the second is to stabilize the economy and prevent hyperinflation and a sharp decline in production through profound structural reforms and people's privatization. Not a struggle between reformers and communists, but a divergence between two approaches among reformers—that is the true crux of the disputes and conflicts bred by the political crisis.

So on 25 April you will above all have to make an objective assessment of the results of the economic and social reforms of the last 18 months. I will present some figures to you so you can make a considered judgment. I state straightaway that my assessment of these results is negative, although I was and I am ready to examine any material showing any positive improvements. Unfortunately no one has yet been able to present such information.

It is time for all parties to the conflict to admit bluntly and openly that the economic experiment of Ye. Gaydar and his main adviser, U.S. economist J. Sachs, failed. Not one of the goals set by the government was achieved. Not the strengthening of the ruble. Not the formation of a deficit-free budget. Not economic recovery. Not effective privatization.

However, a monstrous price was paid for this experiment. Some R350 billion in savings were confiscated from the people by an illegal willful act. Prices of food and industrial goods have gone up 100-300 times over, but wages have gone up only 10-30 times. The difference in income levels between the poorest 10 percent and the richest 10 percent of people in Russia is 1900 percent. In the United States, France, Britain, and Sweden the difference is between 300 and 600 percent.

For millions of Russian citizens 1992 was the year of the collapse of their well-being and hopes. The population was told that they should just show a little patience, then everything would be fine and an economic upswing would begin. Unless my memory is at fault, such statements were made from the platform of the Grand Kremlin Palace at least four times. But nothing went any further than promises.

The crisis has had a catastrophic effect on the demographic situation in Russia. For the first time in recent decades the death rate in 1992 exceeded the birth rate by 70,000, and in the last two years the average life expectancy in the country has fallen by 18 months. If this process continues at the same pace, by the start of the next century Russia's population may be under 100 million.

Even during World War II our country did not experience a decline in production such as has happened now. The slump in industrial production has been more than 20 percent, the slump in agriculture has been almost 30 percent, and the slump in housing construction has been 27 percent. Russia has been set back 30 or 40 years. The decline in production in the first quarter of 1993 accelerated sharply, exceeding a level of 20 percent compared with the same period of 1992. [sentence as published] If we progress, or rather plummet, at that rate, by the start of the second half-year we will have reached the critical point beyond which irreversible processes may begin. What it proved impossible to do to Russia through wars has become possible in just a year of "democratic" rule.

The financial system has been destroyed, and the ruble finds itself in the position of the currency of a colonial state, where it will soon be necessary to use scales to determine the rate against the dollar. A country until recently respected in the world community has slipped into the bottom 10 in terms of its level of creditworthiness.

Exports are now practically nothing but raw materials. Oil and gas make up two-thirds of exports, whereas a year ago they made up just 40 percent. But even these raw materials, part of the country's nonrenewable wealth, are being wasted. Imports of machines and equipment are 3.2 times down, and low-quality alcoholic drinks and tobacco products now make up over half of all imports into the country. Overall, imports in the first quarter of 1993 were only 39 percent of last year's level and were dominated by the aforementioned goods.

The free-for-all in the economy and the lack of any sort of control in both the state sphere and the private business sphere have meant that over the last year a powerful mafia infrastructure with strong support even in the upper echelons of power has emerged.

We Need Separation and Cooperation, Not the Collapse of Powers

So who is ultimately to blame for the impending catastrophe? The Congress of People's Deputies or the "reform government"? As for the Congress, I will be blunt: It has a great share of the blame. This lies primarily in the fact that it gave its consent to the economic adventure without demanding a clear, consistent, and lucid plan of action from the ideologists of shock therapy in Russia and without defining a system for monitoring the progress of the reforms, and also a system of responsibility, including personal responsibility, for actions. The Congress bears the responsibility for not having found within itself the strength to remove from power in time the sorry reformers Ye. Gaydar and G. Burbulis, A. Chubays and A. Nechayev, V. Makharadze and A. Shokhin, A. Kozyrev and V. Shumeyko.

Nonetheless, why has there been such a sharp deterioration just now in the struggle between the executive and the legislature? I will again be frank in giving my opinion.

The results of the reforms are becoming more and more obvious to everyone—parliament, government, and president alike. Consequently, the influence of the extreme radicals in the president's entourage has started to wane. Ye. Gaydar, G. Burbulis, M. Poltoranin, and A. Nechayev have lost their positions one by one. The president himself nominated V. Chernomyrdin, a man of more sensible and balanced views, as the new prime minister. That was when the radicals went on the attack. They decided to go for broke. And the reason for this was not merely the loss of government posts, but a fear of being responsible for the monstrous pillaging of the country's wealth.

Consider the following figures. Even by the smallest estimates, 1992 saw an outflow of $17 billion in capital abroad. If converted into rubles at the rate of R700 to the dollar, this sum is essentially equivalent to GNP over the past year (R15 trillion). Millions of tonnes of petroleum products and strategic raw materials have disappeared without trace, as have dozens of tonnes of gold and rare-earth metals. And it is very interesting that both the past government and the present government—which is virtually unchanged in principle—have shown no great enthusiasm for finding what has been stolen. But I think everyone will understand, because it was this very government that created and stimulated the conditions for this plunder.

There have continually been reports in the foreign press to the effect that high-ranking "radical democrat" officials—G. Popov, G. Burbulis, and A. Sobchak—are buying homes in America and other Western countries as well as shares and plots of land. These reports require thorough objective checks and investigation, but certain forces are preventing even this. And yet it is clear even to the untrained eye just who is attempting to nudge the president onto the path of unconstitutional dictatorship, clearly contrary to his own views and interests. These are figures for whom dictatorship represents the only way of avoiding retribution for what they have done.

A small insight into the mechanism whereby hard currency is transferred from the state to private pockets was given by G. Popov in one of his television appearances. He said that officials at city halls and other state organs are entitled to earn 15 percent commission on any deals they set up. Throughout the world this is termed bribery and punished with the full force of the law, yet in our country it has become the "democratic" road to the marketplace. This is where to find the real causes of the artificial whipping up of political feelings which we have encountered of late. Ye. Gaydar's erroneous policy has escalated into a crime by mafia officialdom which needs to avoid all forms of public monitoring—parliament, the free press, opposition parties and movements—for cover-up purposes. It was no accident that it was G. Popov who openly put forward a program for scrapping the soviets and who is now directing the entire campaign to implement this plan from L. Brezhnev's dacha.

You have seen how political sentiments have been whipped up over the past few months, and how people who not only had their own opinions but voiced them —disagreeing with the policy of shock therapy, the belittling and plundering of people, and the squandering of Russia's wealth—have been pigeonholed as "brownshirt reds," "enemies of reform," or "traitors." I cannot fail to quote some statements by two new ideologists of the "democratic forces"—G. Burbulis ("Whoever is not with us is against us") and S. Filatov ("We will not tolerate an opposition around us...").

Such statements reached their pinnacle in recent months, when an attack was spearheaded against the Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies. For all the clamor of their slogans and the support of a propaganda machine, the radicals failed to achieve one thing—a majority in the Supreme Soviet, at the Congress. Moreover, as a result of the economic crisis and their unfulfilled promises, their ranks are dwindling with every month that passes.

Yes, there is discontent in society with the deputies' work. But are we satisfied with ourselves, our thoughts and actions, and the abilities at our disposal to implement our ideas or our knowledge of the theory and practice of carrying out reform? I think not. Because the Congress is ultimately nothing more than a mirror image of the processes taking place in society. It is a kind of carbon copy of society, which will have a difficult road to travel. There will be many more obstacles to overcome along that road.

Let's remember that the deputies at this Congress were elected by the same people who elected the president of the Russian Federation. And many of those deputies had 10-15 rivals whom they beat in an honest contest in full accordance with all the criteria of the Western electoral system. This Congress, like the president, is a product of its time, a time when Russia was still the RSFSR and a component part of the Soviet Union. If we pursue this logic, then it was the "party nomenklatura" who brought B.N. Yeltsin to power. That is why I would advise people to remember the proverb that "people who live in glass houses should not throw stones." Nor should we forget the democratic demonstrations of 1990-91 with the slogan "All Power to the Soviets!"

And remember that the victory in August 1991 was largely brought about by the fact that the republic's deputies at the Russian Supreme Soviet showed courage and consistently upheld the path of democratic elections.

But what is happening now? More and more political parties and movements are cutting themselves off from the democratic vector of development with every passing month. As a result, a situation has emerged whereby a narrow group of individuals possessed by "barricade radicalism" have tightly surrounded the president of the Russian Federation and marked down anyone who disagrees with them as being "wrong." Radicalism that indeed borders on adventurism has become their main political slogan. These forces, on the pretext of being resolute and defending the democratic process, are starting to move toward openly strong-arm methods that threaten to bring about a new social explosion in society. The calls to ditch the current Constitution, dissolve the soviets, and rewrite the country's history are coming from their ranks. And recent rallies have even issued calls for the internment of many top officials in the legislature, executive, and judiciary.

Having seized virtually all the mass media—with the clearly expressed aim of covering up the truth about what is happening and deceiving the people—the radicals are now launching an offensive against the leadership of the Federal Information Center on the pretext of demanding safeguards for "free speech."

And in order to prevent any criticism being voiced at local level, God forbid, a cohort of "commissars of the nineties"—the president's representatives—are acting as supervisors. It is sad that in certain areas this role is having to be carried out by upstanding people, against their own conscience. And administration heads, for whom these representatives are like a monkey wrench in the works, keep quiet. You can understand why. As soon as anybody tries to voice any criticism, the slander machine goes into operation, dirty tricks are done, and people are given their marching orders. That is what happened to V. Mukha and Yu. Nozhikov, administration leaders in Novosibirsk and Irkutsk Oblasts.

V. Ryumin, the mayor of Ryazan, who guarantees a 92-percent turnout of eligible voters, talked frankly about how to influence the populace in an interview with NEWSWEEK magazine in connection with the upcoming referendum: "We have a warehouse full of vegetable oil, and we intend to sell it at half price to anyone who goes to vote." And he added J. Stalin's words: "The voters decide nothing. The people counting the votes decide everything."

Few of the critics of the Supreme Soviet and Congress realize that efforts to deal with these bodies can only result in one thing—the destruction of the rule-of-law space on a national scale; a situation where administrative tyranny can take the place of the law.

Let us ask ourselves the question: Who has been preventing resolute and consistent action for the renewal of society and for reforms these past 18 months? Indeed powers have been granted on more than once occasion, powers that even went beyond existing legislation; the people expressed their confidence and support and they were prepared to participate actively in the renewal process.

But what kind of market can there be, with whom and through whom, if the government has deprived the Russian industrialist, entrepreneur, farmer, private businessman, and kolkhoz member of the incentive to produce by imposing excessive taxes? How can we move ahead without creating our own credit and investment policy? How can you talk about foreign investments when our economy's internal mechanism is not operating? How can you have stabilization of the ruble when industry and agriculture are rapidly disintegrating and Russia and the CIS states lack a unified banking system?

What price ruble stabilization when the national currency's rate and its solvency, I emphasize, are determined by the commercial currency exchange, unlike anywhere else in the world? What price ruble stabilization when we have the kind of system of export-import transaction payments that exists nowhere else in the world?

The theoreticians of the "great leap forward" (together with the "great grab," which is the plundering of people's property in the guise of privatization) are still trying to set the tone in the government, when what is needed is practical professionals, capable above all of ensuring that the process of transition to a market economy is controllable and of preventing the catastrophic destruction of the industrial infrastructure. Until there are qualitative changes in the composition of the government, until a government of people's confidence is formed, reflecting the interests and views of the majority of the people and having the support of the majority in parliament, we will continue our slide down the slippery slope.

In these conditions, when we should be thinking not about the rebirth, but about the survival of Russia as a state, the radicals are proposing "resolute action" to harden the anti-people policy, instead of a policy of national accord, instead of a socially orientated economic reform with clear priorities facilitating the solution of vitally important problems! At rallies, in newspapers and journals, and on television, aspiring to the role of the only true champions of the ideas of democracy, they are openly endeavoring to monopolize power at all costs, because, today, power is ownership. This is what actually motivates the radical movement.

Try as I might, I cannot understand the purpose of actions like the show in the Russian Cinematography House, organized by former fighters against the CPSU, dictatorship, and totalitarianism, in support of "resolute actions" by democrats. What actions? Resolute actions by the emerging new dictatorship, although a democratic one, headed by ideologists who have changed their spots?

What will these "resolute actions" lead to? Will they get us out of the social and political impasse? I doubt it. More rallies by the left and the right, intensification of confrontation in a society rent by contradictions? Almost certainly. Can we not do without all this at the moment?

The Russians are a fine people, who are able to understand, forgive, and endure. But not indefinitely. Credibility is rapidly spent. It will disappear completely unless the authorities take a moral stand and get down to some creative work in the very near future—not in the interests of a handful of bribe-takers and speculators, but for the benefit of society, which needs civilized, socially orientated market relations. It will certainly disappear unless we banish the extremism and radicalism and abandon the fruitless experiments on our own people.

As the economic crisis grows, so the social processes taking place in Russian society come back to the crude question of the era of the class struggle: "Who will win?" People are constantly looking for enemies, and there is an increasing number of them with every month that passes. Instead of just one CPSU Central Committee and Politburo, today millions of Russians are classed in the ranks of the enemies. I would like to remind you that in 1990 and early 1991 there were at least five programs on television that could be called pro-opposition. Today there is not one. I think this is the best illustration of "freedom of speech and information."

So this is how it is, as that fine actor L. Filatov put it: "It's impossible to tell what the man on the TV screen is on about. You get the impression that the country is one thing and the television is another, and the television is from a entirely different country."

And that is why the plundering of Russia's cultural assets is bypassed in silence, highly talented people from the Russian land are openly persecuted, historic monuments are being destroyed, and fundamental science, industry, agriculture, and defense are being effectively annihilated. I myself, I will tell you absolutely sincerely, find it horrifying when the Russian intelligentsia is silent, raising its voice only at political gatherings where it is trivialized. After all, the intelligentsia will ultimately have to bear its share of the blame for Russia's moral degradation. In the conditions of the untamed market which is today being installed in our country, the Moloch of consumerism strikes—and has already struck very hard—first and foremost at the intelligentsia. Attendance at theaters has fallen almost by half, subscriptions to newspapers and journals are tens of times lower than they were (and only recently we were proud to be known as the nation that reads most), clubs and libraries are closing. Therefore, in my view, the intelligentsia should today take the side not of some individual, but of the country, of Russia, coming out in favor of its spiritual revival.

In today's tense political atmosphere there is much talk of how the Army is playing an important role in ensuring stability. The politickers are doing everything to demoralize the Army. How can the Army be a factor for stability when unsystematic cuts are in progress and the officers discharged to the reserve do not have housing or sufficient funds to find a job quickly in a civilian speciality? How can you talk about a factor for stability when nearly every day the mass media spit on the military uniform and the history of the Armed Forces and when monuments to the Soviet liberator soldiers are being demolished in the Baltic countries, Poland, and Bulgaria? When every year several thousand mothers lose their sons or find them crippled, when Russian boys in hot spots outside their own Motherland do not know where the shots are going to come from, when attacks on Russian military targets lead only to the "hundred and first" warning notes from the Russian Foreign Ministry and Defense Ministry?

What can you expect from an Army where the privatization of dachas is taking place at an accelerated place at the highest level, while the scale of thievery is the envy of the civil sector? In the Western Group of Forces alone in 1992 property worth a total of more than 200 million marks was stolen.

And attempts are made left and right to drag the Army into political activity and test its endurance, tempting it with totally worthless promises and offers.

And another thing. A significant proportion of the ills that have fallen on Russia are associated with the fact that in December 1991, under the slogan "We will build a new world, our world!", a step was taken the consequences of which Russia and the other republics are paying for today not only with ruined lives and torrents of refugees, but also torrents of blood. History has yet to evaluate what was done with such haste in Belovezhskaya Forest. Of course, independence for the republics was necessary, but was it really not possible to maintain their cooperation in the common interest? Nobody gained from the disintegration of the Soviet Union. As for the CIS, at the moment all we see is mountains of signed but unfulfilled documents, with no clear prospect of economic and humanitarian integration.

In recent months there have been increasing efforts to infect Russia with the "revolutionary itch" to destroy, and people are even saying that if it broke up into dozens of territories it could more quickly bring about the population's transition to market relations. But the market requires exactly the opposite—not a closed space within the confines of a city or region, but freedom of movement of goods and people; not to mention the fact that the lives of individuals and peoples cannot be hacked up into sections. And how do they intend to share out once again and finally destroy the Army and the missile shield of Russia's defense? All these radical escapades hardly appear serious, although they are very dangerous.

New Elections and National Accord

I am profoundly convinced that political stabilization can still be achieved quite soon provided the following basic steps are taken.

First. Influence on the political process and the policy of the country's leadership must be most decisively denied to its extreme groups which destabilize society by means of their extremist policy and the destruction of parliamentary democracy, which threatens to evolve into direct confrontation in our city streets. Both the president and the people's deputies must clearly declare that **Russia's revival is impossible while either side relies on ultraradical forces. It is necessary to deideologize and consolidate the government of national accord and give it powers to take anticrisis measures.**

Second. We need a program to support and develop a **multiparty system in the Russian Federation.** It must, moreover, be program covering not just six months or one year but a much longer period. This program should include elements like the adoption of a Russian law on political parties and public organizations, the definition of their position within the framework of the new electoral system, and the creation of a mechanism for equal access to the state's mass media by political parties which enjoy mass support in reality rather than on paper. Moreover, we need to organize the corps of deputies in the country's supreme legislative prgans according to the principle of party factions.

Only a civilized multiparty system is capable of creating a mechanism for the necessary monitoring of the activity of organs of power, both legislative and executive; it will make it possible to transform the corps of deputies from isolated individuals into an effective system for making legislative decisions. It is necessary that the population, despite its understandable negative attitude toward the term "party," should nevertheless realize that **the absence of powerful civilized parliamentary parties is advantageous only to those who are interested in running the country without any monitoring whatsoever.**

Third. In the interests of political stability, it is necessary to create **an effective mechanism for collaboration among all significant forces operating in the country's political arena.** Moreover, this mechanism should not be restricted only to federal level but should also have a nationwide infrastructure. This is the only basis on which we can think of effective coalitions at different levels, including the federal government level.

Fourth. Another component of political accord must be **a corresponding mechanism for collaboration between the branches of power,** including through consultative organs like the Federation Council. Enough was said on this topic at the last Congress of People's Deputies.

We need to realize clearly that all branches of power and all political and social forces today need legitimacy. There is only one mechanism which will make it possible to really separate bombastic declarations from specific influence by various forces or politicians. This is the mechanism of elections. We simply cannot avoid this. **Unless the present body politic is renewed, unless a new generation of politicians join all echelons of power, we will continue to flounder in trying to decide who is more legitimate and more powerful—the president or congress, the Supreme Soviet or the government.**

Naturally, elections are not a goal in themselves. They could become the first step toward a qualitatively new political system which will be appropriately enshrined within the framework of the country's new constitution. I have repeatedly emphasized that we need a new constitution. But its adoption must be backed by the logic which is generally reflected in the relevant decisions by the congress of people's deputies. Any attempt to "sneak in" the new draft simply because someone, some single individual, likes it will result in serious political and legal conflicts. In this context it is necessary to realize clearly that our radicals' desire to inter the present Constitution as soon as possible, without doing any serious work before the adoption of the new one, is fraught with the direct threat of of destroying the legal area on a nationwide scale.

Accord among the political forces can and must be reached primarily around the economic strategy for Russian society's development, a strategy which would be acceptable to at least the bulk of the population in terms of its social orientation while actively developing and supporting private business and enterprise. Bluntly speaking, this will be no easy task but, in my view, it is nonetheless quite attainable.

As far as I am concerned in my capacity as vice president and citizen, I have proceeded and still proceed from this simple rule: Not to close my eyes to what is happening and to call things by their proper names, even if "common sense" and caution seem to dictate that you should pretend not to notice. This is not "a soldier's bluntness" but the stance of a citizen of his country and a politician who perceives the meaning of his actions not in the struggle for power but in the opportunity to exercise power for the sake of the people, for the sake of changing reality rather than beliefs.

PRAVDA Article Assails Farm Reform

PM1604141393 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 15 Apr 93 p 3

[Aleksandr Rutskoy article: "Will the Countryside Survive?"]

[Text] Scarcely a day goes by without a letter (or several letters) about the calamitous situation in the countryside landing on my desk. Kolkhoz members, private farmers, and farm leaders all write. These letters express the same disturbing question in one form or another: "If we ruin the land and farms, how are we going to feed Russia?" I entirely share this pain and concern and I know that this is no exaggeration—that "prospect" is entirely realistic. Production of foodstuffs has declined to a critical level and losses are literally stifling farms. Country people are losing faith that they will be able to get onto their feet in the near future. And what is life like without faith?

Promises and Reality

Radical transformations are under way in Russia today. They embrace all spheres of life and have involved millions of people in this process. We are forced to recognize as a real fact that many vitally important sectors of the national economy, including the agro-industrial complex, find themselves in unendurable conditions of production activity. Special mention must be made of the problems of the agricultural sector—they are a kind of trump card in the hands of political demagogues, who have suddenly become major agrarian "specialists" who are trying to convince citizens that their approach and their approach alone toward the reform of the agro-industrial complex is the repository of ultimate truth and that any approaches and proposals that do not come from the "democrats" are unacceptable because they are not based on market principles.

It seems to me that these people do not understand the main point—the fact that the agro-industrial complex is a most important component of Russia's economy. It provides almost 30 percent of national income and its raw materials go to make up over 70 percent of the consumer market. The agrarian sphere affects everyone's interests, and its development decisively determines the national economic potential and political situation in the country. The current extremely disturbing tension in society stems primarily from the absolutely unsatisfactory supply of food to the population, which is unworthy of a great power such as Russia.

It is no accident that the Second (Extraordinary) Congress of Russian People's Deputies specially discussed the situation in agriculture and adopted a decree "On a Program To Revive the Russian Countryside and Develop the Agro-Industrial Complex." The Congress reaffirmed diversity and the equality of the state, kolkhoz-cooperative, private, and shared collective forms of ownership and supported the development of all forms of economic management: kolkhozes, sovkhozes, peasant farms, and cooperatives and associations of them.

The Congress (please excuse the long quotation) instructed the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet, the Council of Ministers, the supreme organs of state power and management in the republics within Russia, the soviets of people's deputies of krays, oblasts, autonomous oblasts, and autonomous okrugs, and their executive and administrative organs in their practical activity to give priority to the development of the agro-industrial complex and to profoundly restructure structural, investment, and tax policy in favor of the social sphere in the countryside. It was also planned to ensure budget financing and material and technical supply for housing construction, the construction of cultural and health-care projects, schools and preschool establishments, and trade, public catering, and everyday service enterprises, the construction of highways, the provision of gas and electricity supplies, and communications. The Congress did not stint on funding either: The decision specified channeling at least 15 percent of national income into these purposes each year from 1991.

Russia's citizens ardently supported this decree, for it kindled in their hearts hopes of the revival of the countryside and strengthened their faith that its working people would cease to be outcasts of the state. I make no secret of the fact that I too entertained such hopes.

A year ago, when the president of Russia instructed me to coordinate work in the sphere of land reform, the "democratic" mass media were full of prophecies: What can be expected of a military pilot and engineer who is taking over at the helm of Russia's agrarian sector? But I saw this differently: as personal responsibility for the progress of agrarian reform. I thought that in close contact with the government, we would be able to do something worthwhile for the Russian countryside and to travel the path of implementing the decisions of the Second Congress of Russian People's Deputies.

Alas, these hopes were not vindicated. Many members of the government, plunging headlong into political struggle, totally forgot about the existence of the agrarian sector of the economy in Russia. Any reminder of it gave them toothache and evoked personal hostility toward the vice president. But never mind, I will survive personal hostility one way or another, but will the countryside survive? The forgetting of its needs has already led to irretrievable collapse in the economy and to sharp tension in the social sphere.

Heading in the Wrong Direction

The government's prices, credit, tax, and investment policy has totally disrupted the financial position of the agro-industrial complex. Because of the discrepancy between the growth in prices of industrial and agricultural output, income on many farms cannot ensure even simple reproduction.

How do our "reformers" view this? Without a trace of embarrassment, they assert that these difficulties and the slump in production are a natural temporary result of the implementation of any reform, and we need only show a bit of patience. It is rather strange to hear such conclusions now, when in practice agriculture has been wrecked and set back 10 years, because I well remember that at the Second and Third Congresses of Russian People's Deputies, seeking support for their plan for transformations, they assured deputies that progress along the path of reform would make it possible to steadily increase production. In reality the result was different. The government, forgetting its promises, actively began revising and reviewing the program for the revival of the Russian countryside, thereby violating the Congress decree signed by B.N. Yeltsin. This was displayed particularly vividly in the activity of the government when Ye. Gaydar and G. Burbulis applied the so-called "shock therapy"—accelerated reform—tactic, displaying an elementary failure to understand the needs of the economy and agriculture. By their irresponsible actions they reduced agriculture and the agro-industrial complex as a whole to the humiliating status of bankrupt.

Just remember how hastily the documents concerning the implementation of agrarian reform were adopted at the time. The president's edict "On Urgent Measures To Implement Land Reform in the RSFSR" came out 27 December 1991. The Russian Federation Government decree "On Reforming the System of State Management of the Russian Federation Agro-Industrial Complex" appeared 28 December, and the decree "On the Procedure for Reorganizing Kolkhozes and Sovkhozes" appeared 29 December. The government was in a hurry and adopted these documents with frantic haste. And the people who hastily prepared the government decree (V. Khlystun, N. Komov, I. Altukhov, V. Bashmachnikov) ignored theoretical research on the role of the state and state structures during the transitional period from a planned to a market economy and failed to take into account world experience.

The government spurred on mass privatization and the reorganization of kolkhozes, sovkhozes, and other state enterprises in the agro-industrial complex and hastily organized peasant (private) farms. The elimination of kolkhozes and sovkhozes irrespective of the farm's position with regard to production profitability became a kind of incomprehensible aim in itself. By the start of this year almost 20,000 kolkhozes and sovkhozes had undergone reorganization and re-registration, and over 800 open joint-stock companies, 8,600 limited-liability partnerships and mixed partnerships, and 1,700 agricultural cooperatives had appeared. Moreover, 347 kolkhozes and sovkhozes were converted into enterprise and organization subsidiary farms and around 200,000 private farms were created. However, purely symbolic funds were earmarked for these purposes of the reform; they did not even approximately match its scope and tasks.

Meanwhile the government invariably emphasized that the redistribution of land, equipment, livestock, and seed stocks and faster privatization is the right way to increase the efficiency of agriculture and that the development of private farming is nothing other than a panacea for all ills in the agro-industrial complex. But they forgot the most important thing—determining the sequence and priorities of the reform, real finance, and the state's material ability to facilitate transformations in the countryside. Especially as the East European countries' experience of carrying out reform showed that an abrupt, unsystematic switch from production in large collective farms to production in private family farms without financial and material and technical support from the state may lead to catastrophic consequences for the country's economy.

What have we gained as a result by jettisoning our own historical experience and the lessons of reform abroad, in China? The disintegration of kolkhozes and sovkhozes, the total disorganization of their work, and private farming that has not gotten onto its feet, not through its own fault, of course. The social infrastructure of the countryside is on the brink of ruin, and so forth. On top of that there is the unsystematic approach to supplying the countryside, which is based on the need for people in the agrarian sector to beg humiliatingly for funds, and the "wise" foreign economic policy geared to pumping strategic resources [abroad] in order to obtain hard currency, primarily for food purchases abroad. This policy has just one aim—to stimulate agrarian commodity producers abroad, rather than our own peasants, who are constantly deceived (at one moment with the "Harvest-90" checks, at the next with the promise to allocate currency for food purchases in 1991-1992).

Hence the sharp slump in production and the colossal losses of output (40-60 percent), and as a result the shortage of the most essential foodstuffs at prices the population can afford.

Do you think the "reformers" have repented of their actions and learned the appropriate lessons from them? I am afraid not. They seem not even to have noticed them. In order to vindicate themselves somehow, they have found an enemy—the "party nomenklatura" and the Congress, which have supposedly prevented them from carrying out their plans. On the other hand the results of their irresponsible activity have been fully felt and will be felt for a long time yet by tens of millions of Russian citizens from whose diet meat, sausage, butter, dairy products, vegetables, and fruit are disappearing.

So what prompts such an ardent wish on the part of the democratic government to smash the existing system of production in the countryside as rapidly as possible, rather than reform it in conformity with market conditions? Once again the answer is political aspirations: We will create a stratum of small property-owners in the countryside, they think, and they will become reliable supporters of us. And it does not matter what the economic and social results are here.

Back to the Wooden Plow

It is not all that long ago that we were all legitimately proud of the fact that we were keeping pace with many developed countries in terms of the production of many types of agricultural equipment. We had developed and were ready to produce new types of agricultural machines and technological lines for the primary processing and storage of output. But... It is now appropriate to return to pre-1917 statistics to see just how many draft horses, wooden plows, wooden harrows, and so forth czarist Russia had. Never before have we experienced such a rapid reversion to manual implements.

I know that tomorrow people will reproach me and say: Rutskoy is exaggerating the seriousness of the problem and scaring people. Okay, let's take a look at the figures, they are more eloquent than any comments.

It is no secret to anyone that supplies of equipment, spares, and fuel and lubricants to the countryside have deteriorated sharply in recent years. This problem is a serious brake not only on the current economic and production process in the agro-industrial complex, but also on the implementation of agrarian reform as a whole, the transition to mixed agricultural production, and the improvement of its efficiency. Because of the low level of labor mechanization, equipment downtime for the same old reasons—the lack of spares, fuel, and lubricants—and the reduction in funding, failures to keep to the timetable for operations and to maintain their quality are becoming the norm in our country, and this is having repercussions in the form of a shortfall in production of food resources, which we later use strategic and raw material resources to buy from the West, which "ardently supports" our reforms. This problem has become a kind of "perpetuum mobile" and of late has not only not been resolved but on the contrary is worsening. All because of the same "shortage" of financial resources.

Comprehensive mechanization has still not been completed in any sector of plant growing. The level is no more than 61 percent in grain production, 46 percent in potato growing, 37 percent in beet growing, and even less—around 25 percent—in open-air vegetable growing.

The military-industrial complex has elaborated new types of agricultural machines and industrial equipment for processing agricultural output, packaging, and storage and they are ready for series production. But unfortunately the "democratic reformers'" disregard of the problem of earmarking circulating and investment financial resources for the production of such important equipment is retarding a solution of the problems of agriculture and the processing of output, is bringing high-technology, science-intensive enterprises in the military-industrial complex to the verge of bankruptcy, and is leading to a colossal exodus of highly skilled engineering and technical personnel and workers. How's that for reform priorities, how's that for a reforming approach. But this is nothing surprising when the program of machine building for the agro-industrial complex has not been approved or financed for a year now and when a similar fate has befallen the programs for the production of industrial equipment for processing, packaging, and storage proposed by the vice president and enterprises in the agro-industrial complex and by the Academy of Agricultural Sciences.

Grown and... Lost

I am tormented by the thought: Could Russia sharply reduce the shortage of foodstuffs even the next few years and stop going cap in hand to near neighbors and those further afield? In order to answer this question, you need only take a look at our fields in the fall and acquaint yourself with our processing industry. The answer can only be in the affirmative: "It certainly could if..." Indeed, if we considerably reduced losses of output during harvesting, storage, processing and delivery to the consumer, losses running into hundreds of billions of rubles, losses of the results of the labor of millions of people.

Judge for yourselves: Each year 45-60 percent of potatoes and vegetables, 40-45 percent of sugar beet, and 30-45 percent of grain are lost. That is the quantity of grain we lose during harvesting, drying, and storage. In addition, losses because of imperfect techniques in processing grain into flour and mixed feed run at up to 20 percent of the total gross harvest, and that is 15-18 million tonnes. If we total up all the losses, we get a volume of output twice as big as the volume we are forced to buy abroad. There is your answer to the question: Can Russia feed itself (this analysis is given in more detail in my recent book "Agrarian Reform in Russia").

But it is impossible to do this given the present approach toward solving the problem. After all, in 1992 alone the construction of 130 food industry enterprises was frozen and overall the increase in capacities for the storage and processing of output declined. Look at the table:

Commissioned	1986-1990	1991	1992
Meat (tonnes per shift)	424.5	69.4	25.0
Sausage products (tonnes per shift)	48.1	32.0	17.1
Wholemilk products (tonnes per shift)	1,520.1	560.8	328.2
Cheese (tonnes per shift)	13.5	4.4	2.2
Granulated sugar (thousand quintals of beets refined per day)	8.6	7.4	2.0
Vegetable oil (tonnes of oilseeds processed per day by the extraction method)	10.0	25.0	—
Grain elevators (thousand tonnes stored at one time)	618.6	237.2	139.2
Milling enterprises (tonnes of grain processed per day)	2,204.0	1,525.0	1,170.0
Mixed feed enterprises (tonnes of mixed feed per day)	3,927.0	1,195.0	100.0

Given this approach, instead of a reduction in losses there has been a steady increase, accompanied by a reduction in production. Last year alone production of meat declined by 23 percent, cheese by 26 percent, confectionery by 33 percent, vegetable oil by 21 percent, groats by 29 percent, and fish products by 16 percent. The situation with regard to the production of baby food is quite alarming. As a result only 10 percent of the need for industrially manufactured dairy products in liquid and paste form, 26 percent of the need for powdered milk mixtures, and 38 and 22 percent of the need for canned meat and vegetables respectively is being met. I would note that last year commissioning of capacities for the production of meat, granulated sugar, wholemilk products, cheese, and sausages was less than one-fourth of the annual program.

There you have the reform, there you have the results of the rejection of a sensible approach toward solving the food problem in the country. There is only one conclusion: Unless the destructive process of so-called "reforms" in the countryside is halted, we will not extricate ourselves from this plight even next century.

Conscience Objects

The hard times that have begun for the countryside together with the economic reform have weighed down on it and have disrupted the accustomed measured tenor of life and work.

The lack of everyday amenities which even previously depressed peasants has worsened considerably. At present up to 1 million families living in the countryside need apartments or improved housing conditions. The housing shortage is increasing because of refugees from the CIS countries. The material base of cultural and everyday establishments does not meet existing norms and makes it impossible to create any sort of conditions for proper leisure and education for children. Over half of clubs housed in buildings and premises adapted for cultural enlightenment purposes are in a decrepit condition and require major repair.

And can it be regarded as normal for each village to have on average less than 700 meters of internal farm roads with any form of surface when settlements are from 3 to 30 km away from the service centers? It is no accident that transport expenses now make up 40 percent of the prime cost of agricultural output while today the state's prevailing economic relations with the countryside have in general placed commodity producers in conditions where they cannot cover their expenditure even with the entire proceeds of output sales.

Many rural residents are cut off from the outside world because of the crazy increase in transport ticket prices. Only 15 out of 100 families in rural areas have telephones in their apartments, and over 800,000 families are waiting in line for the installation of phones, including around 106,000 invalids and war veterans. The situation regarding health care in the countryside has fallen to the level of the late fifties.

Last year the funds channeled into the social sphere in the countryside were over 50 percent down on the previous year. This is why it was not possible to fulfill the plans for the construction of housing, kindergartens and creches, medical establishments, clubs, and cultural centers, which will certainly considerably worsen the already rather poor living conditions in the countryside.

I know people may criticize me and say: "But you are vice president!" Yes, I am vice president, but a vice president practically without rights and powers who has probably only one right—the right of conscience. And it is precisely because I make active use of this, my only right, that I am the constant target of mudslinging for my views and convictions and I am called names: "war party," "traitor," "hussar son of a sow," "antimarketeer," and so forth.

Hence also the nearly total sabotaging of directives, instructions, and proposals by the president's "superdemocratic" entourage. But what else can you expect with regard to the vice president's proposals and directives when the president's edicts are not fulfilled and the government is incapable of ensuring the implementation of even decisions that it itself has adopted.

Can there be any question of any reforms in the agroindustrial complex when I had to organize the 1992 sowing and harvesting campaigns by setting up an operational staff in order to resolve matters eventually, albeit with something of a battle? What has changed in the 1993 sowing campaign? Absolutely nothing, despite all the assurances and promises by both the president and the government.

Arrant irresponsibility and inefficiency have corroded all organs of power like rust. The system for managing the day-to-day economic process in all sectors has been totally ruined, to say nothing of the management of the economic process of reform. To this must be added the total robbery of the country. This is what has brought Russia to its knees.

I get the impression that all state programs for housing and everyday construction in the countryside, the provision of gas and electricity supplies in the countryside, the construction of highways in rural areas, the provision of water supplies in rural population centers, and the development of communications facilities have effectively been wound up.

The "democratic reformers" have marched into the abyss of the market with blindfolded eyes, dragging Russia's peoples after them. And in order to duck responsibility, they have invented the new slogan of the need for "resolute action" and the demand to "restore the hierarchy of executive power." They portray economic collapse as the result of the actions of "revanchists" among the party nomenklatura.

A question arises here: Exactly who has prevented resolute action when throughout the last 18 months power has been practically entirely in the hands of the people who have wrecked all power structures on the pretext of combating totalitarianism and the administrative-edict system?

I could spend a long time discussing what has happened to us. I have merely sketched out the situation in a single sector. I think there is no particular point in explaining what lies in store for us in the future given this kind of approach toward the countryside's needs, for people are increasingly aware of this themselves.

The upcoming referendum too is more of a moral act than a political act. By this act the citizens of Russia, despite all attempts by mass propaganda, again fueled by promises, have been given the right to think and express their opinion. To say "yes" or "no" to the guidelines that people are trying to portray to us as the only correct ones on the path of reform, "yes" or "no" to further impoverishment and a slide into the abyss. Indifference here is impermissible.

I am convinced that the overwhelming majority of our citizens are in favor of reform, in favor of civilized economic, market relations. But they are favor of reforms that are understood by and useful too the whole of society and serve the course of reviving a great and glorious Russia.

Yeltsin Attack on Rutskoy 'Small-Minded'

MK1604120493 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 16 Apr 93 p 9

[Veronika Kutsyllo: "Authorities on the Eve of Referendum. Boris Yeltsin Decides To Act on His Own"]

[Text] As recently as yesterday most observers were agreed that in the days leading up to the referendum the opposing factions were unlikely to take any new drastic steps that could seriously alter the political situation. However, after Boris Yeltsin promised to modify the procedure for counting votes on the first two questions of the referendum by issuing an edict to that effect and substantially cut the powers of the vice president, it can be presumed that the situation will deteriorate sharply. But, to all appearances, this will happen after the referendum.

The president made public the first of his "fresh" initiatives at a meeting in the Kremlin yesterday with representatives of democratic movements. Boris Yeltsin promised that after 20 April he would sign an edict establishing that votes cast on the questions of confidence in the president and support for his social and economic policies would be counted in accordance with the Law on the Referendum.

It is well known that this law lays down that for the adoption of a positive decision on issues requiring amendments to the Constitution, 50 percent of the votes cast by those participating in the referendum—and not those entered in the lists of eligible voters—is sufficient. Apparently, according to the president, the Congress and the Constitutional Court are already as intertwined as a Gordian knot, and there is no hope whatsoever that it will unravel by itself.

Boris Yeltsin said at that same meeting that he intended to strip the vice president of his right to supervise land reform. At approximately the same time, Aleksandr Rutskoy's press service in the person of his assistant, Andrey Fedorov, confirmed reports that the vice president had indeed fallen from grace: He was denied his personal Mercedes, most of his bodyguard, and his personal doctor.

This maneuver on the part of Boris Yeltsin was entirely predictable since the Constitution does not provide for a mechanism for the vice president's resignation. Since Rutskoy, who kept criticizing his boss wherever possible, plainly intended to take over Yeltsin's post should Yeltsin be deposed, the president had to employ the tactics of both moral pressure—like a suggestion that he should resign—and material ones—like those he made use of yesterday. The latter, however, are also of mostly moral significance, and if one recalls Rutskoy's "officer's honor," they smack of throwing down the gauntlet.

At the same time, Boris Yeltsin's attack on Rutskoy appears somewhat small-minded and is bound to provoke a similar sort of accusation against the president. It is not hard to predict that the first mighty storm of indignation will hit the president this morning if Yeltsin, after taking these actions that the vice president finds so hurtful, comes to the congress of the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs as planned.

As a matter of fact, at a press conference given by the Russian Democratic Reform movement that was held after Yeltsin's meeting with the democrats, movement chairman Gavriil Popov noted that the office of the vice president should be abolished altogether. Maybe the new draft Constitution, the active promotion of which started the day before, does not provide for the office currently held by Aleksandr Rutskoy, either.

The distrust of the entire Constitutional Court that Yeltsin publicly expressed yesterday, saying that the court's authority "has dropped significantly" in his eyes, again, is not conducive to the stabilization of the situation on the eve of the referendum. This approach appears to have been prompted by two reasons: Either the president, after his meeting yesterday with Valeriy Zorkin, concluded that the judges were unbending and "any and all" requests made by anyone except parliament would serve no purpose, or Boris Yeltsin is deliberately trying to aggravate the situation with one simple aim in mind—a scandal always attracts onlookers who for that matter may also cast their votes.

The president's actions, which are offensive not only to Rutskoy and the Constitutional Court but also to the entire deputy corps, will naturally provoke the parliamentarians to retaliatory action. Being aware of this, Boris Yeltsin attempted yesterday to forestall them—he said he did not rule out that parliament might annul the voting on 25 April.

Most observers, however, believe that such a turn of events is very unlikely: Too cumbersome a machine has been set in motion. The parliamentarians, to all appearances, will try to exploit the president's latest steps in the referendum campaign as, for instance, a proof of the president's penchant for unlawful actions and, hence, for a dictatorship.

Former Moscow Mayor Comments on Power Struggle

LD1804191493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1854 GMT 18 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Moscow April 18 TASS—Gavriil Popov, leader of the Russian Democratic Reform Movement, said the possibility of Boris Yeltsin being replaced by Aleksandr Rutskoy as president, is a dangerous possibility.

Speaking in a live broadcast of Echo of Moscow Radio Station, he said, specifically, that Vice President Rutskoy, instead of using his levers of legislative and executive power for combatting corruption, demands that another commission be formed to verify facts.

"Rutskoy is a honest man after his own manner, but he is accustomed to seeing an enemy through the sights, while relations of different kind exist in politics", said Popov, the former mayor of Moscow.

Asked about the draft new constitution, Popov noted its main specific features: First—the rights of the federation's subjects are absolutely equal, that is republics within Russia and territories have equal rights, second—the government is quite autonomous within the executive authorities. Although president appoints prime minister, the appointment needs to be endorsed by parliament. Parliament also endorses the government's programme.

Popov declared against the perpetuation of the Constitutional Court. He believes new constitution should stipulate the existence of the Supreme Court which is to deal with the most important affairs. It is difficult to separate constitutional law from criminal, civil and other affairs that are also governed by the constitution, Popov said.

Security Chief on Rutskoy's Claims Regarding Security

LD1904023393 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Interview with Mikhail Barsukov, chief of the Main Directorate of the Government Guard of Russian Federation, by an unidentified correspondent; place and date not given; from the "Itogi" program—recorded]

[Text] [Barsukov] I heard this statement by Aleksandr Vladimirovich Rutskoy yesterday. I can tell you frankly that it was rather emotional, and it does not reflect the truth. The essence of the problem lies elsewhere, I believe. Yes, there was indeed a cut in staff. Yes, there were indeed organizational staffing changes in the Presidential Security Service, which is a structural element of the Main Directorate of the Guard. The staff of this service was cut by 58 persons, and this number also included employees from the 2d Department of the Security Service who are engaged in guarding Vice President Rutskoy.

These were not, in any way, actions that can be linked—as has been said—to any of his .... [changes thought] These were ordinary, normal, organizational staffing changes. If necessary, I am ready to present the orders that were issued on the completion of work by a commission even earlier, previous to this.

[Correspondent] Does Aleksandr Vladimirovich have any grounds to fear for his safety now, after these realignments and, as he said, to worry about his family in simply human terms? For example, should he worry about them staying at the dacha—which he also mentioned at the Supreme Soviet?

[Barsukov] I do not know if Aleksandr Vladimirovich has any grounds, but I do not have any such operational information. There is no such information from the Ministry of Security, nor is there any such information from the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Aleksandr Vladimirovich lives within guarded grounds, in a guarded building. It is a state dacha belonging to the Russian Federation President's Administration—Arkhangelskoye—the Arkhangelskoye complex. He occupies one of the buildings there. Ruslan Imranovich Khasbulatov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet, lives on the same grounds. A number of other guarded persons live there who—indeed every one of them—can voice concern about the protection of his family or about the state of the protection. However, I would consider it wrong to make such statements to the effect that his family is constantly under threat and that protection is not provided.

The VECHERNYAYA MOSKVA paper for 16 April 1993 reads thus [video shows Barsukov showing newspaper headline]: Physical Removal of President Being Prepared. This article says that even more alarming information is coming in; about special detachments training in hand-to-hand fighting, about the equipment of secret agitation centers in communication with other towns, and so on. It also says here that the physical removal of the president on the eve of the referendum—or prior to the referendum—is, indeed, being prepared. [Russian Communist Party leader] Zyuganov did, indeed, say: Our task is to remove Yeltsin without shedding the people's blood. This is now being studied. Now what is that, if it is not a direct threat to his life and thus security. Naturally, when we receive such things, we check such facts in our work.

[Correspondent] Finally, let me ask you, as chief of the president's guard, why is Aleksandr Vladimirovich worried—perhaps on a personal basis—about the person who occupies this post? Or, what is your attitude toward all this?

[Barsukov] I believe that it was unworthy of the vice president, as second in command in the state, speaking in parliament—in our Supreme Soviet—to raise questions and settle accounts with the chief of the guard. That is petty.

Legal Aspects of Rutskoy Situation Discussed

LD1804223493 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 18 Apr 93

[From the "Itogi" program]

[Text] [Anchorman Yevgeniy Kiselev] The legal aspect of the situation that has arisen around Rutskoy is just as important as the political one. Suren Avakyan, doctor of juridical sciences who is a Moscow State University professor, and Aleksandr Yakovlev, doctor of juridical sciences and professor who heads the department at the State and Law Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences will explain the legal aspect.

[Begin recording] [Avakyan] The constitution says that at the request of the president, the vice president is obliged to carry out his occasional [otdelnyye] instructions. That is one provision. Another provision is that if the president is absent, the vice president stands in for him. The third provision says that if the president is incapable of fulfilling his duties, the vice president begins to act as president. But if the vice president exceeds his constitutional powers, such as his obligation to fulfill the president's occasional instructions, and takes upon himself some wider functions, in this case his actions are outside regulations provided for in the constitution. That is the only thing one can say about this [chuckles].

[Yakovlev] In accordance with our constitution—Article 121-10—the vice president can be dismissed from his post under a procedure provided for in the constitution for the dismissal of the president of the Russian Federation, that is, if he breaks the Russian Constitution, or the laws of the Russian Federation. In other words, the congress would have to adopt a decision to that effect. That must be preceded by the Constitutional Court taking a preliminary decision. The initiative on the dismissal of the vice president from his post belongs to the congress, the Supreme Soviet or one of its chambers. The president is not named among those who has the right to dismiss the vice president. Certainly, the vice president can resign. However the constitution does not provide for the president forcing him to resign.

The problem is that the law has nothing to say about what needs to be done if the vice president has been sacked or has resigned. In this respect we have a loophole in the law. [end recording]

[Kiselev] So it is evident that the problem of relations between the president and his vice president has no legal solution. Yet the outcome of the forthcoming referendum may introduce into this problem some additional judicial nuances. Sergey Shakhray, for instance, noted that according to Russia's law the vice president is not an independent figure. If the referendum does not show confidence in President Yeltsin, the outcome would have the same meaning for Vice President Rutskoy who was elected in tandem with the president.

But will the opposite outcome of the referendum work the same way: Will the vote of confidence in the president mean a vote of confidence in Rutskoy? Evidently, this situation can only have political solutions.

Peasants' Party Withdraws Backing for Rutskoy

MK1604133093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Apr 93 p 2

[Unattributed report under the rubric "In Brief"]

[Text] Moscow—The Peasants' Party of Russia has released a statement on "the complete refusal to support the ex-reformer Aleksandr Rutskoy and share responsibility with him." The document asserts that Rutskoy has changed from a defender to an oppressor of private farmers, and "composed a theory that private farmers are unnecessary and costly to the state." The Peasants' Party of Russia also believes that the vice president has gone back on his own earlier idea for land banks.

Officials on Appointment of Vice Premier Lobov

Yarov: 'A Positive Step'

OW1604120093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1106 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Vice Premier Yuriy Yarov of the Russian Federation says that the newly appointed First Vice Premier Oleg Lobov will handle economic matters. Speaking to an INTERFAX correspondent he referred to the appointment as "a positive step. Russian authorities lost control at some stage and seem to have forgotten that if there is property, then there must be management." He thinks that the Lobov appointment will help to some extent to remedy matters "and we will manage at least what belongs to us." Asked whether there will be two positions of first vice premier in the Russian government, Yuriy Yarov said "Looks like it." Vladimir Shumeyko is another first vice premier.

Gerashchenko, Ispravnikov Comment

OW1604130093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1252 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Vladimir Ispravnikov, deputy chairman of the Russian parliament, said that Oleg Lobov had been appointed first vice premier because the president and prime minister "sense weakness of the economic block in the government and try to strengthen it. They seem to look for a balance." He told INTERFAX that the Lobov appointment would be useful for the government.

He expressed the hope that members of Russia's cabinet will face up to the choice between the government being a team or a "political club." Ispravnikov said that most "sound thinking deputies" want the government to be a strong depoliticized team of professionals.

In an interview he gave INTERFAX during a convention of the Russian Congress of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs Viktor Gerashchenko, governor of the Central Bank of Russia, said that Lobov's appointment was cleared with Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin. He recalled that Chernomyrdin and Lobov had been acquainted for a long time and said "I do not think there are any problems in their relations." On the differences between his bank and the Finance Ministry on the monetary and crediting policies Gerashchenko said that they "do not add to confidence on the part of businessmen." He did not think that this factor was responsible for the continuing plunge of the ruble against the dollar.

Vice Premier Lobov Also Appointed Minister for Economy

OW1604191793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1859 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Oleg Lobov, who was appointed First Russian Vice- Premier on Thursday [15 April], has also become the nation's minister for the economy. Interfax has been informed that during Friday afternoon the head of the Russian Cabinet of Ministers Viktor Chernomyrdin had attended a meeting of the Board of the Ministry for the Economy. There he introduced the department's new head.

Chernomyrdin stressed that the ministry should be the core of Russian economic activity and play the leading role in the implementation of reform in Russia.

Yeltsin Asked Not To Yield to Civic Union Pressure

OW1504195093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1922 GMT 15 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Council of Representatives of the Democratic Choice [DC] Alliance has called on President Yeltsin and Prime Minister Chernomyrdin not to "yield to blackmail by political leaders who spoke a short while ago of seeing no chance of reconciling with the Russian president before the referendum".

A DC statement issued on Thursday [15 April] accused the centrist Civic Union [CU] alliance of a renewed attempt to try to force a bargain on Yeltsin under which he would have to cede several ministerial posts to the CU in exchange for its political support". [no opening quotation mark as received]

The DC Council demands that Aleksandr Rutskoy and Georgiy Khizha stop intervening in the activity by the State Property Committee and let its leader, Anatoliy

Chubays, work in peace. It also calls for whatever measures are necessary to implement the land reform and remove Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy from it's helm.

The DC statement also stresses the need for urgent measures to prevent the revival of former sectoral structures in the form of existing departments or the economics ministry from being turned into a kind of the former Soviet Gosplan.

The DC does not rule out that CU leaders may take advantage of "a new gathering by the Arkadiy Volskiy-led Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs on April 16 to try to bring pressure on the Russian President".

Deputy on Attempt to 'Compromise' Executive Power

LD1704212193 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1825 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Interview with People's Deputy Gennadiy Vladimirovich Veretennikov, head of department for work with the territories and presidential repesentatives in the presidential administration, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given—live or recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Gennadiy Vladimirovich, recently we have often heard it said that we are under threat of dictatorship.

[Veretennikov] Yes, that is being said at congresses of people's deputies, at Supreme Soviet sessions, and at various seminars and spectacles which are currently being organized by Supreme Soviet leaders. Everywhere it is stressed that if there is a president, a presidency, and democrats and the executive power remains, then we are in for dictatorship. I understand what is going on here; it is being done in order to mislead people, to frighten them in some way. And yet in fact, they are already preparing their dictatorship beneath this slogan.

What we predicted is happening even now, in the runup to the referendum, and we can cite the facts. Our department, which covers the territories and presidential representatives and ties with the Supreme Soviet, has information from all the regions at its disposal. Very alarming trends have been observed in a number of oblasts where elections of heads of administration have been held. For instance, after Aleksandr Andreyevich Kondratyev, the head of administration of Penza oblast, was not reelected on 11 April, and Kalyagin, a former Party Central Committee official, was elected in his place, the following incident occurred. At 2000 on 14 April, Aleksandr Andreyeyevich Kondratyev was stopped on the road as he was driving along in his car, and was taken to the Ministry of Security, where he was interrogated until 0200. After this, he landed up in hospital with a heart attack, and is presently in a very grave state. This we have from the lips of Professor Tatarchenko, head of the Penza Oblast Cardiological Center. In an attempt to conceal what is going on in the oblast today, the head of administration spoke on television in the oblast, and said that telephone calls and letters are coming in about what happened. These assured everyone that nothing is happening at all, no arrest or detention, the man is simply sick, and that he is already feeling well, and so on.

To put it mildly, this is completely untrue, and we want today to highlight this to both of the citizens of Penza Oblast and all citizens of the Russian Federation. Kondratyev's apartment was searched—his apartment was searched, as were his brother's and his father's. The progressive newspaper, PENZENSKIYE VESTI, was also searched and nothing at all was found. But all this was prepared so as to compromise the bodies of executive power in the Russian Federation as a whole, ranging from the president to those bodies of executive power.

The next example I want to cite comes from Orel Oblast. The man elected head of administration in Orel Oblast was Stroyev, who is likewise a former secretary of the Oblast Party Committee and of the Central Committee. Such movements are beginning there as well. Here is some information which we have received from Orel Oblast. Stroyev opened a meeting with staff of his apparatus—he had gathered together some sort of aktiv—with the following words: We must not work now with people who are against us; we must look into those rayons which voted against me and make an assessment of this matter. Stroyev has now brought together for conferences the first secretaries of party rayon committees with whom he used to work, whereas all the heads—I mean deputy heads—of administration of the oblast have, in effect, been removed and do not take part in such conferences.

At the conference he makes statements such as this: We must stage a show trial of Golubitskiy, the chief director of the theater, because he is a Jew and is mocking the Russian actor Frolov.

In other words, from the examples of Penza Oblast and Orel Oblast we can already see a return to the old system in its very worst form. It smacks of 1937. These are the people who during the elections criticized only the reforms, who said that they would feed the people and get down to business. This is how they are beginning their reforms. I want to repeat that all this has not just been prepared off the cuff, and it is continuing. One cannot rule out that there will be further attempts to compromise the executive power and to effectively destroy even the tender shoots of democracy which have emerged through reforms in the oblasts and krays.

In Chelyabinsk Oblast the oblast soviet raised the issue of pre-term elections: the oblast court ruled that this decision was illegal, but the oblast soviet holds the elections and spends 200 rubles; and what is more, dishes out about 10 million rubles in cash to the soviet chairmen to campaign to get Sumin, the current chairman of the oblast soviet, elected. People learned from the press and the central radio and television and newspapers that the court ruled the decision illegal and that the elections were invalid—only 17 per cent voted for Sumin, and 6 percent for his opponent. But we can see how all this is being whipped up, how an attempt is being made to destroy and compromise the executive power.

Today we know that the Supreme Soviet is examining the issue of setting up a committee of investigation under the auspices of the Supreme Soviet. In the Novosibirsk and Saratov oblasts and many others there are now observation committees which are restricting the rights of our mass media. Today it is only the chairmen of the soviets who have access to the mass media. The heads are virtually being moved aside—as was said by Voronin and Ryabov yesterday in a telephone hook-up conference. There they said straight out: Do not allow and do not give the heads of executive power an opportunity to speak; do not give public organizations the opportunity to be observers in these electoral commissions. We mention these facts with alarm today only so that citizens of the Russian Federation understand that democracy today rests in their hands, and that Russia's future is in their hands. If what I said comes about then this will be a catastrophe for our whole state.

A telegram signed by Voronin, first deputy of the Supreme Soviet chairman, has been sent throughout the entire Russian Federation. In it he insists that the soviets decide on the issue of representatives in an unequivocal fashion, and to decide on their accommodation, funds, communications, transport, and so forth. This is not the first time that there have been attempts to eliminate the president's representatives. Once again we would like to stress that this is an infringement of the law. All decisions of the Congress of People's Deputies referred to by Voronin are at present being examined by the Constitutional Court, and it is only once the Constitutional Court has finished examining these issues that it is legal to decide on them. We know perfectly well why this is being done: so that the president's representatives are dismissed, got rid of, reduced in number, and gagged in any way possible.

[Correspondent] Our country's whole history is repeating itself—like what is happening at the moment.

[Veterennikov] I entirely agree with you. This has almost become a law. But it would be better if what is happening now and what might happen was not repeated. I would like to take as my starting point the fact that Russia's citizens at present have the opportunity to prevent a return to the past from taking place. If there is a return to the past, this will be a tragedy.

Everyone who saw the broadcast of Rutskoy's speech yesterday from the Supreme Soviet realizes that resentment was being expressed. A dacha and a car had been taken away from the man and straight away he gathered up a bucket full of mud, which he flung at the president and at those whom he believes have insulted him. The most important thing here is that the person who is responsible for coordination and the action of bodies in the fight against crime and corruption is effectively taking no measures whatsoever. He keeps on saying that someone is obstructing him and so forth. Nonetheless, he carries facts in his pocket which should have been given to the procuracy ages ago, that is if this man were acting in accordance with the law and not simply reporting back to the Supreme Soviet before the referendum, in order to compromise the president and the bodies of executive power.

I also want to say that not everything is as smooth as he paints it. We can all see very clearly that corruption and crime are indeed widespread today, and we all need to combat them. Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin has spoken about this repeatedly, and documents and presidential decrees have been adopted. But the people who were instructed to tackle this, and the tasks which the vice president coordinates, must have an active part in the work—and not simply sound off in Parliament and say obstacles are being put in their way. The obstacle I reckon is simply that someone does not want to get on with the job and is looking for excuses not to.

There's an old saying: If you want to do something, seek ways of doing it; if you don't want to do anything, seek an excuse. That is what Rutskoy is doing right now. I stress, the Procuracy does not have any evidence of what Rutskoy was talking about—this is all just a sort of bomb being kept at the ready in an attempt to compromise the executive powers in the immediate run-up to the referendum. Then once these powers have been compromised, the idea is that people would believe it and vote against.

Referendum Issues

Yeltsin To Sign Decree on Referendum Vote Counting

OW1604191693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1859 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Sergey Filatov, Head of Administration of the Russian President, told a Moscow press conference Friday [16 April] that Boris Yeltsin did intend to issue a decree on April 20, in accordance with which the president would have to gain a simple majority at the April 25 referendum to gain the vote of confidence from the nation which he seeks.

The 9th Congress of Russian People's Deputies passed a resolution according to which the president would have to receive the votes of 50% of the electorate plus one.

Filatov told an Interfax correspondent that he had been informed that the Constitutional Court was likely to review the congress' resolution on the above and make a ruling favorable to the president.

The president's advisor Yegor Gaydar, who also took part in the press conference, together with Aleksandr Yakovlev, the vice-president of the Gorbachev Foundation, and former State Secretary of the Russian Federation Gennadiy Burbulis, spoke of the purpose of the public committee formed a few days ago to conduct the referendum.

The members of the committee, which has the backing of 89 democratic organizations throughout Russia, intend to step up promotional activity in all of its forms in the days running up to the referendum.

The public committee is appealing to all Russians to give a "Yes" vote to the first, second and fourth questions at the referendum and a "No" vote to the third on early presidential elections.

Stepankov Comments on Referendum Law, Media

LD1904112793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1108 GMT 19 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Moscow April 19 TASS—"The Congress of People's Deputies of Russia manifested a certain untactfulness with regard to the current law on referendum," Russia's Prosecutor-General Valentin Stepankov told ITAR-TASS in an estimate of the congress resolution on the counting of votes cast during the forthcoming referendum.

"The congress, in my view, entered into contradiction with the current legislation," he specified, pointing out that this matter is "within the competence of the Constitutional Court".

It must be recalled that the congress decided to count votes from the viewpoint of the total number of people with the right to vote, not the number of those who will participate in the polling. In that case, the president would win only if he polls more than a half of the votes of those who turned 18 and have the right to vote, including those who stay at home and not go to the polls.

"I am for the referendum law," the prosecutor-general said when asked whether he is for President Boris Yeltsin or for Parliament Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov. "The prosecutor's office may not uphold the political views of this or that side. It is good when the interests of law and politics coincide. In that case, there are tranquility and all is well in society. If this is not the case, the law has priority", he said.

Stepankov said that way back at the congress he had voted against introducing a kind of censorship committees—supervisory councils—for radio and television. "It is impossible to gain an understanding of the issue without giving it a second thought," he specified. However, Stepankov said not all aspects of the law on the mass media suited him, just as, probably, many a journalist. But since the law exists, certain amendments should be introduced only after a serious deliberation.

"The main thing in this respect is not to censor materials but to provide all political forces with access to audio and video news media and newspapers. Unfortunatelly, the voices of individual deputies, who took a legally valid of view of the situation, were not heeded," he said.

"The prosecutor's office, the Interior Ministry, the Ministry of Security and the court may not and will not punish for dissent," Stepankov emphasised. "Our duty is to intervene only when signs of a crime appear: a call for a forcible overthrow of government or stirring up of ethnic discord. And we do intervene in such cases."

Stepankov said in this connection that the prosecutor's office instituted judicial proceedings against the newspapers RUSSKOYE VOSKRESENIYE, NARODNOYE DELO, RUSSKIYE VEDOMOSTIY, PULS TUSHINA and some other papers.

A warning was issued to the newspaper DEN (DAY). A closure suit has been filed with a law-court, he said.

Stepankov maintains that there is no violation of the law in the fact of the publication of his and his deputy Yevgeniy Lisov's book entitled "The Kremlin Conspiracy" about the events of August 1991.

"We have a moral right to tell what we accuse people of without divulging investigation secrets," he said. "The more so after a charge has been brought and the investigation completed. Otherwise, people could learn 'the truth' only from numerous interviews given by Kryuchkov, Lukyanov and other defendants".

"Supporters of State Emergency Committee members attack the book because they really dread what it recounts. They still entertain hope to evade punishment under some pretext. We have done our job honestly within the confines of law. Our conscience is clear. We are clean before the people. And we have no regrets," Stepankov said.

Sobchak 'Convinced' of Yeltsin Referendum Victory

OW1704142093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1401 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Mayor of St. Petersburg Anatoliy Sobchak is convinced that the Russian president will emerge victorious from the national referendum on April 25. He stated during a press conference in Moscow on Saturday [17 April] that the referendum would be the main event of the near future and added that "Russia might do without it if the political situation did not find itself in an absurd deadlock".

He believes that in April 1993, just like during the presidential elections of 1991, Yeltsin will be supported in big cities. "Problems may arise in the provinces, where the leading posts are occupied by former party functionaries," he said.

In his opinion, there is no legal procedure ensuring the implementation of the results of the referendum. Taking due account of Mikhail Gorbachev's bitter experience and inability to use the results of the referendum on the preservation of the USSR, one should act "quickly and resolutely" after the April referendum, he said. In view of this, Sobchak proposed adopting a new constitution by the constituent assembly and holding presidential and parliamentary elections in February or March 1994.

"Should Yeltsin lose during the referendum, he would have no chance of winning the presidential elections, Sobchak told journalists. [no closing quotation marks as received]

Political Leaders Debate Referendum Questions

LD1604144693

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 1445 on 14 April carries the 60-minute live or recorded "Referendum" program. Participants include presenter Yevgeniy Tolstykh; political scientist Aleksandr Tsipko; and journalists Andrey Sokolov of VREMYA and Boris Konovalov of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet committee for mass media; Deputy Sergey Baburin of the "Russia" faction; Deputy Yevgeniy Kozhokhin of the "Accord for the Sake of Progress"; Vadim Kozhinov of the "Russian National Union"; and Aleksandr Mekhanik of the "Russian Federation Republican Party."

The studio discussion program starts with presenter Yevgeniy Tolstykh asking faction representatives to outline their views on the referendum's questions and their proposed responses to these.

Deputy Sergey Baburin of the "Russia" faction says that he and his faction are confident that the answer should be "no" to the first two questions, which deal with the vote of confidence in the president and his economic policies and "yes" to the other two. He says that there should be early elections of both the parliament and the president. He says that the Congress should have voted for simultaneous reelection of both the president and the parliamentary speaker. "I do not doubt that if President Yeltsin loses the vote of confidence, Khasbulatov will fulfill his promise and resign from his post as chairman of the Supreme Soviet."

Deputy Yevgeniy Kozhokhin of the "Accord for the Sake of Progress" says that the referendum is a risky undertaking in terms of what could happen after 25 April. He says it is obvious that another congress will be convened immediately, which will try again to strengthen its positions by making further amendments to the Constitution using its unlimited legislative powers. "The Congress wields enormous power and can, unfortunately, drive all the executive bodies of power and the country as a whole into a really tight corner." Kozhokhin says that his faction proposes to answer positively to the question on reelection of the deputies' corps. The president should be supported at this critical moment, because stability of Russia should be paramount, therefore "yes" to the first two questions and the last one, and "no" to reelection of the president.

Vadim Kozhinov—writer and a former dissident—of the "Russian National Union" [Rossiyskiy Obshchenarodnyy Soyuz] criticizes the government's economic reforms at length quoting, as he says, from a report by IMF economists which was published in NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA. He says that the main question this referendum has to decide is whether the present course of reforms should be continued.

Aleksandr Mekhanik of the Russian Federation Republican Party says that his party was in principle against the referendum, but since it is inevitable, the party will also be campaigning and taking part in it. The question on reelection of the deputies should be answered positively, first of all, because public opinion on the whole is against the Supreme Soviet in its present composition. The president should be given a vote of confidence. "With all their imperfections, the president and his team provide a certain guarantee of stability and democracy—in spite of all the accusations being hurled at the president at this moment." So, the party proposes that the answer to the first two and the last questions should be yes and the third question should be answered no." Mekhanik says that whatever its outcome, it is unlikely that the referendum will lead to any significant shifts or transformations of the political situation.

"Our expert," political scientist Aleksandr Tsipko, says that the referendum will play a decisive role in the future of the country and he personally would like to answer no to the first two questions and yes to the other two, that is, there should be general elections of both the president and the parliament. He criticizes Yeltsin at some length for "representing all that disintegration and chaos mean" in the society, blaming him for most of the country's present ills—from the Belovezhskaya Pushcha (where initial CIS treaty was concluded) and failure to keep his promises to the Russian people to the "badly conceived, disastrous reforms." He is especially critical of the government's intention to introduce private ownership of land, basing his view on inability of the vast majority of the Russian people to afford any land purchases, which should result in the Russian land being bought up by rich foreigners. He says that the Russian president already has more power than the U.S. President and that the parliament does not stop him from putting the country in order or making the right economic decisions. He calls the referendum a "colossal provocation in the history of Russia," says that by staging it the government "declares and practically provokes a civil war," and advocates scrapping it altogether. "To announce a referendum at a time when the full ineptitude of both domestic and foreign policy has become evident is a sort of masochism." Tsipko is worried that if Yeltsin wins the referendum "it will be the end of this country, because this will trigger conflicts between the regions" and "the disintegration of Russia will promptly follow."

Discussion then moves into a question and answer stage and evolves into a heated debate, with differences of political views keenly disputed. It continues along the lines of how the economy should have been managed and what will happen if the referendum yields this or that result. Baburin says, inter alia, that the present reforms are supported by the "Yeltsin-Poltoranin monopoly of the press" and oriented toward "the economic interests of western firms and the local profiteers." But if the president and the government are reelected, "reforms that are oriented toward development of the national enterprises and what we call the military industrial complex—which has become something of an abusive term but, in actual fact, is a depository of our top technologies—such reforms will be given headway. I am in no doubt that as soon as we change our present regime, these reforms will take off."

Burbulis Predicts Attempts at 'Wrecking' Referendum

LD1904055793 Moscow Programma Radio Odin Network in Russian 1430 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Interview with Gennadiy Eduardovich Burbulis, head of the Strategy Analytical Center, by correspondent Valeriy Shabanov; place and date not given; from the "The Week Day-by-Day" program—recorded]

[Text] At the present time, the president's political opponents are not stopping at anything, even provocations, in order to discredit the reforms that are under way. One of them is a canard that has been dubbed "The Burbulis Plan for the Preparation of the Referendum." "New Wave" correspondent Valeriy Shabanov attempted to find out the secret motives behind this scandal, to which end he met with Gennadiy Burbulis, head of the Strategy Analytical Center.

[Shabanov] Gennadiy Eduardovich, you are no longer in government or even in the entourage of the president, as some deputies say. Nevertheless, there is no holding back your political opponents. An excellent testimony to this is the alleged Burbulis plan on holding a referendum. Well, what is the purpose of this fabrication?

[Burbulis] There are many reasons. On the one hand, perhaps, it is to set us at loggerheads somehow, in the run-up to very important political work—the referendum. On the other hand, it is also the wish to portray Burbulis once again as someone stern and inaccessible. In actual fact, however, when a fabrication is concocted, it is an act (?imbued with) political cynicism. There and then, persons willing to print it are found, and there is the eager expectation: What will he do? There have already been responses from the other side. If this is a fabrication, why don't you turn to the Court and defend yourself. What one gets is that, instead of seriously and purposefully helping the president and the reformers' course today, such litigation is being foisted upon us with a touch of scandal of this kind about it.

[Shabanov] Of late, many fears (?are being voiced) in connection with possible political provocations in the run-up to the referendum. In my view, there is already a flash flood of them and at various levels—both in the center and in the regions. It is sufficient to recall the unexpected rise in gasoline prices and the removal of the president of Mordovia. I think that the Burbulis plan is also from the same stable. Do you think this is systematic work, or are these simply some chance costs, so to speak?

[Burbulis] No. Of course, there is method in the work of our opponents because the stakes are so high. I want to ask listeners to stop and think. In actual fact, one question has been placed on the referendum—whether or not our Russian Federation is to be a fully-fledged, worthy democratic state, or whether we will again return to the endless promises of a happy life, drowning in conflicts of the old soviet power and its [word indistinct] people. The fact is that provocations are, unfortunately, the norm for our opponents.

I remember our election campaign in 1991, and I can even predict a little that an unrestrained attack will begin on Boris Nikolayevich in the new days. A flow of filth will begin to flow. Fabrications akin to the one that you have already discussed could reproduce such invented scandalous events and all kinds of large and small facts with only one aim: to discredit the president and to somehow cause trust in him to be lost.

One needs to be vigilant in this respect and trust one's intelligence to a greater extent and, of course, one's courage of choice. Because they will come if we do not turn out for the referendum. They will come to stay a long time. They will deal with us mercilessly if we do not say yes to the policy of Russian reforms, yes to the president as the leader of the reforms and as a worthy political arbiter who is the only one today who shows a real path to stability. This means the people's expression of its will and a new constitution. In that case, we will be marking time in the swamp of this political confrontation, in which revanchists, pro-communist drones, and simply out-and-out mafia will be interested as never before.

[Shabanov] Since the center that you head is called Strategy, can you give us today an analysis of the development of the next few events until the referendum and soon after it?

[Burbulis] Well, this is a very difficult task. As a rule, strategy presupposes predictions of long duration and involving multiple aspects. You are correct, however, in saying that Russia will make an historic strategic choice on 25 April. Let us try. I think that both the majority of the congress and Khasbulatov—and those whom he represents today—will be interested to the maximum in wrecking the referendum or in disorganizing it in the regions, or in an attempt to belittle its possible results and to portray it as a popular choice of little significance, of little substance.

Pollster Says Yeltsin Win 'Impossible'

PM1604152093 Rome L'UNITA in Italian 14 Apr 93 p13

[Interview with Yuriy Levada, director of the Center for the Study of Public Opinion, by Jolanda Bufalini in Moscow; date not given]

[Text] Moscow—Yuriy Levada is director of the Center for the Study of Public Opinion, which sounds out the state of health of the Russian president's popularity each week.

[Bufalini] What are your predictions regarding the voters' attitude toward the referendum?

[Levada] The difference between the big cities on the one hand, and the small cities and countryside on the other, is growing. Abstentionism is increasing in the latter. In the cities both democracy and the reforms have very strong support; I am talking above all about Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Yekaterinburg. In Moscow about 71 percent of the electorate will turn out, and 60 percent will vote in favor of Yeltsin. The figure has not changed for some time, and moreover aversion to the Supreme Soviet and Congress has increased. But that 60 percent becomes 42 percent when compared not with the number voting but with the number entitled to vote.

[Bufalini] So according to your calculations, Yeltsin will not be able to get a majority with the electoral mechanism approved by the Congress?

[Levada] No, especially since there is a difference of approximately 10 percent between Moscow and the rest of the country. Let's say that if Moscow's support for Yeltsin oscillates between 62 and 58 percent, that means about 45 percent in the country.

[Bufalini] So in your view, the president enjoys the support of the majority of the country but he will not be able to win the referendum?

[Levada] That is right; and it is even clearer where the question on handling economic reform is concerned. It is clear that not even God could carry out an economic reform which would please people. It is interesting, however, that we have been asking the same question for a year: "Should economic reform go forward?", and the answers are 50 percent positive, sometimes more.

[Bufalini] In the cities?

[Levada] No, throughout the country. The situation in the countryside, however, is getting worse and the number of those opposed to it has increased in the past two months, but two-thirds of Russia's population live in the cities. The figures collected in March confirm that 48 percent are in favor of reform and 17 percent are against. That is the paradox: Despite everything, the majority of the country is in favor of reform, but it is impossible for Yeltsin to win the referendum.

[Bufalini] The percentage of abstentions seems to be rather high. What is the reason for that?

[Levada] Above all, people are tired of politics. A part of the electorate may change its mind if the choices become clear.

[Bufalini] Can you tell me something about the influence of the other political forces? For example, Volskiy and his Union?

[Levada] In my view, Volskiy is an enigmatic figure. Some people think his positions may be useful, but he has never adopted a personal stance and has no prestige with the population. In my view, he is a mythical figure.

[Bufalini] So what are the political forces influencing the country's situation?

[Levada] In practice there are none. After the collapse of the CPSU, our society has neither reorganized nor stabilized. The most numerous party is the Communist Party. According to polls, 4 percent of the population are members. That may be a slightly exaggerated figure, but in any case it has more members than all the other parties put together.

[Bufalini] And Rutskoy?

[Levada] Rutskoy, who might formally replace Yeltsin until new elections are held, is not a well-defined figure. That is precisely why he is useful, although it is true that his party is part of the Civic Union. He has a certain amount of popularity because he makes himself heard. All in all, there are no leaders hard on the heels of Yeltsin with his 25 to 30 percent.

[Bufalini] Do you think ethnic issues in Russia will influence the referendum?

[Levada] For the moment I do not have any data. Certainly, in republics where there are declared autonomous entities, such as Chechnya and Tatarstan, there will be problems. Tatarstan refused to vote even in the last presidential elections.

[Bufalini] Turning from sociological surveys to politics, do you see any possibility of compromise?

[Levada] For the moment I do not think so. Everybody will continue to insist that his own position should prevail, and that will have two consequences: The first is that the government will start to work on its own, managing without the power of the president and of parliament. The second is that the regions will start to live independently of the center, to introduce their own prices, their own laws. They are already doing so.

[Bufalini] You think the referendum will solve nothing?

[Levada] Absolutely nothing. Yeltsin is calling for four "yes" votes so that he gets moral support at least. I do not think there is any radical way out, or that we will get as far as open warfare. Even if it wanted to, the Army would not be able to take sides openly.

[Bufalini] Have you run into a blind alley?

[Levada] Yes.

Military Issues

Grachev Addresses Reserve Officers' Assembly

LD1604115893 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1000 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Video report by correspondent S.Sokolova; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] An all-Russian assembly of officers in the reserve took place in the Central House of the Russian Army today. The main purpose of those who had gathered in the hall—former servicemen, and now private farmers, production workers, and entrepreneurs from virtually all regions of Russia—is to help the Army to survive in conditions of the present economic instability.

Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev opened today's session.

[Begin Grachev recording] I will tell you bluntly: I will help you—with all my efforts I will help you. The main thing is that our work should be to help the Army. [end recording]

The main problem of the Armed Forces, Pavel Grachev said, is still the problem of reducing the Army and providing housing for the units which have been redeployed from the countries of the former union to Russian territory. Questions connected with the upcoming referendum were also touched upon at the conference. The participants in the session tabled a resolution in support of the president and proposed that there should be early reelection of the corps of deputies.

Vows 'Non-Interference in Politics'

LD1604130793 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1150 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Roman Zadunayskiy]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Apr—"The Army has found its correct position of non-interference in politics; it is the guarantor of stability in society and it is a crime to excite the Army," Russia's Defense Minister Army General Pavel Grachev stated. "Stability has now made an appearance in the Army," he said at the all-Russian assembly of officers of the reserve, which began its work today.

Representatives of around 20 public organizations of Armed Forces veterans came from 35 Russian regions. They intend discussing issues concerning the social protection of servicemen of the reserve and entrepreneurial activity and to find a way in which they can support the course of reform. The position taken by the assembly's organizers found support in Russia's military department. The chiefs of the Russian Federation Defense Ministry, the commanders of the branches [vidy] of the Armed Forces and the subdivisions [rody] of the troops, as well as the chiefs of directorates of the Russian Federation Ministry of Defense, took part in it.

I will do everything in my power to help you, Pavel Grachev told the participants in the meeting. Currently, the entire budget of the Russian Federation Ministry of Defense is oriented toward building accommodation for the military, he said. The number of servicemen with no housing, including troops withdrawn from abroad, will total 400,000. According to the minister, military districts have been instructed to build no less than 12-13,000 apartments a year. But construction troops only have 28 percent of required manpower.

The issue of reducing the Armed Forces is very acute. In accordance with the law "On Defense," they are to be cut down to 1.5 million by 1995, primarily through reducing the number of officers; 270,000 officers and warrant officers will have to leave the Armed Forces. The reduction will be carried out gradually, so that not a single officer who has no living accommodations will be dismissed, the minister said. He is ready to approach the Supreme Soviet with a request to extend the cutting-down time to 1996, if necessary. According to the data supplied by the minister, only nine or ten out of every 100 young men are called up to the Army service, and up to 50 percent of men due for call-up are unsuited for military service because of poor health. Call-ups on a contract basis are going well—48,000 contracted servicemen of this year's target number of 100,000 have already joined the Forces. From 1 April 1992, the basic pay of a private and a sergeant serving on a contract basis is 22,000 rubles [per month], and together with additions for rank and allowances, the pay amounts to 40,000 rubles.

Grachev Rescinds Own Order on Officer's Discharge

PM1904131693 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 17 Apr 93 p 1

[Igor Saltykov report under "Briefly and Clearly" rubric: "Stanislav Terekhov Back With the Army"]

[Text] Defense Minister P. Grachev, after weighing up the justice of a decision by the Moscow Garrison Military Court, has issued an order to repeal his own 13 November 1992 order to dismiss from the Army Lieutenant Colonel Stanislav Terekhov, chairman of the Officers Union. This sets the first recorded instance in

Russia's history of an acknowledgment of the illegality of personal ambitions without recourse to further appeal.

First Deputy Defense Minister Interviewed

OW1904091893 Moscow Russian Television and Dubl Networks in Russian 2305 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Interview with A.A. Kokoshin, first deputy minister of defense of the Russian Federation, by unidentified correspondent; from the "Aty Baty" program; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Andrey Afanasyevich, you are what is generally termed, a civilian, is that right?

[Kokoshin] Yes.

[Correspondent] And for the first time in the leadership of the Ministry of Defense, the most important post of deputy minister of defense is occupied by a civilian. Now do you, as a civilian, consider it correct that a civilian should occupy such a post in the structure of the Ministry of Defense?

[Kokoshin] I would say that in principle the decision to make the Minister of Defense a military person was correct. This is a Russian tradition, and traditions cannot be disregarded.

[Correspondent] But what if we were to follow other examples?

[Kokoshin] At the same time civilians are well represented in the ministries of defense in many countries. That is why I feel the decision to introduce a civilian and to create a certain segment of civilian personnel within the Ministry which was adopted in the first stage of the formation of a new Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation was justified. They have always been present, but as a rule only in auxiliary roles. And it seems to me that a fairly good mixed team of civilians and military people has formed. They are dealing with problems of arms and the problem of developing future arms and military equipment. [Interview is interrupted for another segment of the program then continues]

One cannot say that there is no military doctrine. There are corresponding plans developed by the General Staff and confirmed by the highest authority. There are plans to build the appropriate groups in the Armed Forces. There are plans for the development of the Armed Forces to the year 1995 and beyond. There is a basis for an arms program for the years 2000 to 2005.

What we do not have, and incidentally never had in the history of our state, is a piece of paper on which the military doctrine is set down. Both during the history of the Russian Empire and during the period of Soviet power, many attempts were made to draw up such a document. But this task was never completed to the point where there was a document which said: Here is the military doctrine of the Russian Empire, or here is the military doctrine of the Soviet Union.

Of course we inherited a mighty defense industry, although it had many weak points and deficiencies. At present, it is all in a state of flux. Some of the enterprises are fully on the path to becoming joint stock companies, others will remain state property or public enterprises. Many cooperative ties were broken. [Interview is interrupted for another segment of the program then continues]

[Correspondent] We know that at the last exhibition in the United Arab Emirates, many foreign experts and specialists were literally amazed by samples of our equipment and armaments. At the same time, there were comments that we will no longer be able to produce such equipment and such samples of armaments. How do we stand here?

[Kokoshin] You know we do have some highly alarming symptoms, particularly regarding cooperation in the creation of especially complex weapons systems. After all, the realization of a truly complicated system sometimes depends on a lot of seemingly small external factors. A number of production lines have been virtually lost. They have remained on the territory of former states of the Soviet Union, former Soviet republics. Some of these production facilities, unfortunately, were unique and are now in zones of armed conflict. Other production facilities are in the territory of republics with which a system of mutual accounting has not been finalized and where political factors constantly interfere, although all industrialists working in the defense sphere in all these republics want very much to cooperate with Russia. In a number of cases, we have been able to set up this kind of cooperation. Probably the best examples in this regard are Belarusia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. Corresponding agreements exist with the Ukraine, but so far they are not operating adequately.

So of course, this is a very serious factor, and extra effort will be required in a number of instances to preserve this extremely complicated cooperation.

[Correspondent] Do you have any ideas about how you would like to see industry develop, particularly military industry?

[Kokoshin] Of course I do. I hope for an improvement in the economic situation, that it will be somewhat different in the future. We are also planning a certain stage-by-stage growth in expenditures for procurement of arms and military equipment. Presently, we have targeted two basic elements in the near future. The first is modernization of those models of arms and military equipment which have really proven themselves and which are being used by the troops, plus the establishment of a scientific and technical capability that would permit us to achieve a certain qualitative leap and expand mass production of the most modern equipment at a time when we are a little richer.

For instance, modernization of the famous MiG-31 interceptor. It would cost about eight times less to modernize this aircraft than to build a new one. The modernized MiG-31M aircraft would have almost the same tactical and technical specifications.

[Correspondent] As a matter of fact, Andrey Afanasyevich, we have a report that allegedly there have been no orders from the Army for procurement of the MiG-29 for the current year.

[Kokoshin] You know that the Mikoyan Design Bureau is developing a future fighter aircraft, and naturally when we were drawing up defense procurement plans we had in mind the fact that a certain number of MiG-29's were at the disposal of the Armed Forces. In fact, we have a rather large number of these machines and, of course, we do not want to order only that which we already have. We want to order more promising machines. [Interview is interrupted for another segment of the program then continues]

[Correspondent] Would you say we are falling behind today?

[Kokoshin] You know that we are in a very serious position, and indeed, our defense complex is experiencing probably one of the most dramatic moments in all the many centuries of Russian history. What has happened is that the pendulum has swung to the other side. Possibly due to the nature of the Russian character, we have swung from surpluses straight to the other extreme.

The drop in defense orders last year was practically catastrophic. We should not have made such radical decreases. We are now trying to straighten out this situation. With enormous effort, we have managed to increase defense orders somewhat for 1993. We had to work with the former government and the Supreme Soviet, and they cooperated with us. Of course, this is not enough. Enormous efforts are also needed to see that conversion funds are used properly, so that the funds are concentrated primarily at those enterprises and production facilities which have the greatest potential for our industry. So we have singled out about 220 major enterprises which form the nucleus or backbone of the defense complex.

Now in answer to your question. Yes, I feel that we did have redundancies, we invested too many resources. When we had plenty of them, they were hardly accounted for and were often spent in an irrational way. Many imbalances appeared in the development of the Armed Forces. Unfortunately distortions were such that today we are being forced to pay a terrible price for them. For instance, we have a very grave situation in the Navy. Presently, hundreds of ships require maintenance, yet no funds for this maintenance exist. [Interview is interrupted for another segment of the program then continues]

[Correspondent] Have you been tempted by the minister of defense or by other leaders to take on a military rank so that you would not stand out among the other deputy ministers? Tell us honestly.

[Kokoshin] Well, you know it is the president who awards military ranks. Personally, there was an initial arrangement with the country's top leaders, and I think there has been no temptation, and that includes the minister of defense with who I have good working relations, to change the status quo. When I came here, I found a lot of strong professionals, people who really know their jobs and who are loyal to the Armed Forces, seriously thinking people in uniform.

Supreme Soviet

Proceedings of Supreme Soviet 16 Apr Session

Rutskoy on Corruption, 'Persecution'

LD1604130393 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1625 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Address by Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy to the Supreme Soviet on 16 April—recorded]

[Text] Esteemed Chairman, esteemed People's Deputies, esteemed representatives of the media. First of all I would like to thank you for the invitation to speak in the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation on information and issues which worry many citizens of our country. I know that there has been particular interest in our political problems, especially over the last few days. I would like to begin my address with the words of the president of the Russian Federation, Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, which he stated yesterday at a meeting with intelligentsia in the Bolshoy Theatre. I do not know how he can continue to work as vice president and retain his honor as an officer. Today the opportunity has arisen to speak, with the facts in my hands, on who has this honor and who does not.

A wave of crime is sweeping over Russia, and only a blind man can not notice it. It threatens to destroy the fundamental supports of the state. Not a single region where the crime situation, and the situation as a whole, could be declared stable is left in the country. In 1992 the number of crimes registered almost reached 2.5 million. The rate at which the number is rising has doubled since 1990. Specialists forecast that by the end of 1993 the total number of criminal acts could be 3.2 or 3.4 million. The life of practically every Russian is threatened in one way or another. An analysis of the crime situation for the first quarter of this year confirms the basis and probability of such forecasts. Over this period, 676,000 crimes were registered—9 percent more than the analogous period in 1992. Serious crime has increased sharply by 41 percent, including premeditated murder by 53 percent, grievous bodily harm by 40 percent, and mugging by 47 percent. In the streets of many towns in Russia, the firing of assault rifles and explosions have become virtually commonplace. Incidentally, less than half of the crimes listed have been solved. According to all the sociological surveys, people in Russia regard crime as the number one problem, and over 90 percent are experiencing a feeling of acute alarm for their personal safety and that of their property. I think everyone can understand that.

Crime reflects as though in a mirror the state of society rather than its basis, the economy. The intolerable crime situation that has developed is nothing other than a direct consequence of the chosen path of shock therapy, with its main result being the nationwide economic and political crisis.

A network of blatantly criminal commercial enterprises and organizations is being formed by criminal groupings with the help of laundered shady capital, geared exclusively to illegal enrichment. It is they, incidentally, who are inflicting damage on the reputations and material substance of the financial and industrial groups, banks, and enterprises that wish to engage in honest business and are investing their resources in production. Criminal deals to siphon off money and raw and other materials from state enterprises into private enterprises, large-scale bank speculation, illegal currency operations, and tax evasion are creating fortunes to be counted not in millions, but in thousands of millions. No small part of it is lying in personal accounts in foreign banks.

According to expert estimates, in 1992 alone the income of the shadow economy, with price rises being taken into account, amounted to 3,500 billion rubles [R]. For comparison, I cite some appropriate figures. About R6,000 billion of the gross domestic product went on consumption by the population of Russia; in other words, virtually half is money from the shadow economy. Organized crime structures control up to 40 percent—over R6,000 billion in money terms—of production, of the gross domestic product in Russia, which amounted in 1992 to R15,000 billion.

We can see an intensive and blatant fusion of the leaders of ordinary crime and economic crime, and the involvement in that milieu of officials and representatives of executive power. As a result of that process, organized crime is forming a strong and widespread system which is laying claim to leadership in the economy and in politics. We are already beginning to receive information to the effect that several of the country's largest mafia groups are starting to train corrupt officials to devise procedures for siphoning off into their own pockets a considerable proportion of the money that the world's leading industrial countries plan to allocate to our country. They are showing a special interest in the resources of the ruble stabilization fund. In that work, the Russian criminal world has active links with foreign partners, including the international drug mafia.

The problems enumerated above did not appear on the agenda yesterday. Let's just see what has been done by the government to defend the economic interests of the state and protect citizens' rights and liberties. I think the government's actions can only be assessed on the basis of documents and facts. Here are these documents and cases, but this is only one-tenth of them.

At my suggestion, the Russian president set up the Committee to Defend the Economic Interests of the Russian Federation on 20 August 1991—this was Decree No. 66—in order to analyze the impending danger and avert a wave of plundering the country. At that time it was still possible to rein in the situation, but because of opposition from Yegor Timurovich Gaydar, Aleksandr Nikolayevich Shokhin, and Gennadiy Eduardovich Burbulis it was not set up for a whole year.

I will read out an announcement—20 August 1991, decree by the president—to set up the committee; it gives a time-frame. To continue: Six months later—and I stress six months—on 29 February 1992, the Russian president issues an instruction on defending economic interests. In other words, the provisions of the decree are confirmed. I'll read out more of these announcements later: A decree comes out, a document by the Russian Federation president, and then a mechanism for carrying it out is activated. In other words, the provisions are confirmed six months later.

To continue: The corresponding instruction and the decree are not fulfilled. No building is assigned to the State Committee for the Defense of the Economic Interests of the Russian Federation, no technical resources are allocated, no transport is allocated, and so on. In other words, everything is done to stop this committee being set up.

Four months later—four months after 9 February—on 9 June, Customs Committee Chairman Kruglov sent a note to First Deputy Prime Minister Gaydar on mutual relations between the Russian Federation's State Customs Committee and the Committee for the Protection of Economic Interests. Here again some kind of confrontation is under way, but the idea is that these two organizations must be merged so that they can work together. Thus, the system is already being prevented from starting to operate normally.

Further, on 17 June the Russian Federation Government issued the instruction calling for a plan to make the committee part of the Ministry of Economic Relations. On 19 June, the chairman of the committee for the protection of economic interests sent a note to the vice president regarding Kruglov's note. Here I shall start investigating things.

Yet another date, on 24 June a letter was sent to Sergey Aleksandrovich Filatov, first deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet, favoring the idea of making the committee for the protection of economic interests part of the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations.

On 22 June there was a further note to the vice president. Again we will start getting to the bottom of things. I wrote to the president saying that it is impossible to work like this because documents have started effectively coming in, that the country is being active plundered in its foreign economic activity.

Further, on 1 June, the president sent a note to Gaydar containing the instruction: Yegor Timurovich, I support the proposal and request you to start working on it.

On 18 September the president sent another note and made a verbal request; Boris Nikolayevich wrote: You are requested to uphold the proposal on retaining the committee for the protection of economic interests.

Thus, on 22 September the committee which failed to be set up was abolished. This is how the committee for the protection of economic interests was set up.

If the deputies are interested in this exchange of correspondence, all the documents are here in this file.

The scenario of confrontation is traditionally simple. On paper everyone is in favor, but in fact there are no people, no premises, no funds, no communications, no transport, no materials. Proposals of possible plans for combatting crime were sent to both the president and the prime minister, but there was absolutely no reaction.

Who needs this? When the process of plundering union property and the property of the CPSU started, it was possibly necessary, but then, you see, they went on to plunder and impertinently plundered the country. For all that the committee was not set up, but it was abolished.

Let us move on. By presidential decree No. 335 of 30 December 1991, a currency monitoring inspectorate was set up under the country's government. How was this decree implemented? Let us once again turn to the primary source, the file of documents. I will read out a summary. The situation is similar.

On 30 December there was a presidential decree to set up a currency monitoring inspectorate under the government; the decree was not implemented. On 23 March 1992—and the decree was dated 30 December 1991—the office of the Russian Federation Government sent out an instruction; once again, it was not carried out. On 28 March, Melnikov sent a message to Gaydar asking for the work on the draft presidential decree on the activities of the state currency monitoring inspectorate, which was sent to the ministries, to be completed as soon as possible. This instruction was not carried out either.

On 30 March, the Russian Federation Government sent an instruction to Golovkov, Arefyev, Moskovskiy, and Telyatnikov; this was not carried out either. Melnikov's 13 April 1992 message to Gaydar was not carried out either. On 30 April 1992, the government sent out another instruction calling for a currency monitoring inspectorate to be set up; this was not implemented either. There were instructions of 19 May, 22 June, 8 July 1992, 30 September 1992—none of these was implemented. A 16 December instruction from the Russian Federation Government was not implemented either.

On 17 December 1992, Shumeyko writes to Shokhin asking him to speed up work on the organization and registration of a federal service for currency and exports monitoring—this is a direct communication between two presidential aides: Shumeyko and Shokhin.

On 26 January, I sent a note to the president explaining what is going on, and saying that we cannot work like this. But to this day the inspectorate has not been set up.

Then there was another decree—I have not yet mentioned it—abolishing the inspectorate; that was on 30 December 1992. That is to say, something that had never been set up was now abolished.

Then there was an instruction, or rather a decree—No. 1148—on setting up a Russian federal service for currency and exports monitoring. It still does not exist. Once again we see premeditated paperwork sabotage, with—once again—a familiar result: After seven months the nonexistent inspectorate is abolished and replaced by a Russian federal service for currency and exports monitoring. Here the story is repeated once again. No funding, no premises, and so on. To this day, the service has not been set up.

The Institute for World Economy and International Relations estimates that the absence of a currency monitoring system in 1992 contributed to a loss to the country of currency, raw materials, and strategic materials to the value of about $17 billion. Other estimates, including those of foreign financial experts, put the sum as high as $40 billion.

The mechanism of setting up various commissions has been carried to the point of absurdity. Let us take the Western Group of Forces: the list of various commissions with their composition and duties covers several volumes.

The amount of hard currency spent on their upkeep over the course of almost two years amounts to millions of German marks [DM]. And not a single commission could breach the unassailable fortress of the Defense Ministry, in spite of the losses amounting to billions—I will give more details later—which Russia is experiencing as a result of withdrawing its military units from Germany.

Once more I have information and a set of documents to read about how the situation developed so that you have some idea about this, and then I will move on to specific examples.

On 4 January 1992, the president issued decree No. 4 on measures to regulate the economic issues connected with the withdrawal of troops from the Western Group of Forces. The first stage was to form an interdepartmental commission with Grachev as chairman. The second stage was to form a state commission subordinate to the president on economic issues with Arapov as its chairman. This was on 4 January.

Two days later, on 6 January, a presidential instruction from the state commission subordinate to the president on economic issues connected with the withdrawal of troops approved the proposal to form a working staff of 47 people in total—including 24 in Moscow—and a command was given that official assistance is needed by the chairman in Moscow. On 20 January, a Russian Federation Government resolution was adopted on measures connected with the temporary stay and the withdrawal of the Western Group of Forces in order to implement presidential decree No. 4, that is to say, the personnel involved and so on and so forth.

On 22 January, order No. 170 was issued, or should I say presidential instruction No. 170, to the control directorate of the presidential staff to check the disposal of property. That is to say, the commission was in the process of being set up when it started to emerge that there was a need to organize some way of checking the disposal of property.

On 7 February, there was an order from the first deputy commander in chief of the CIS armed forces about the system for facilitating the activities of the state commission subordinate to the president of the Russian Federation on the economic issues connected with the withdrawal of troops from the Western Group of Forces.

On 24 February, (Makharadze) of the main state inspectorate made a report, numbered 4-109, to the president on the corruption of high officials in the Western Group of Forces and on the economic crimes taking place in the Western Group of Forces. There was no reaction at all. Let me continue.

On 6 May 1992, the president's decree No. 465 proposed measures to reorganize the structure of the office of the Russian Federation president, and I'm reading from it: The State Commission on Economic Issues under the President is abolished due to the withdrawal of the troops of the Western Group of Forces.

Pay attention to this. Here is a report of 24 February by the chief state inspector on corruption and economic crimes in the Western Group of Forces: On 6 May the state commission was abolished. On 20 May, the government issued a resolution on the issues connected with the withdrawal of the Western Group of Forces signed by Boris Nikolayevich; it created a commission attached to the Russian Federation Government on utilizing the property of the Western Group of Forces. (Arapov) was appointed chairman of this commission. And on 22 July, a government resolution was prepared once more, this time to abolish the commission. But here I am already going into too much detail.

On 2 July 1992, the Russian Federation Government issued resolution No. 465 on the commission for utilizing the property of the Western Group of Forces attached to the Government of the Russian Federation. Again the regulation was approved, and the fact that the commission is a lawful heir of the previously abolished state commission was confirmed. The number of staff is now specified as 20 people, to be located in Berlin and Wulfersdorf. And let us proceed.

On 2 July 1992, the Russian Federation Government issued an instruction to the Defense Ministry on attaching military personnel to the commission on utilizing the property of the Western Group of Forces. These were specialists who have, accordingly, some idea about the issues involved. On 2 July, the defense minister issued order No. 50 about coordinating the work of the bodies of the Russian Federation's Defense Ministry and the commission on utilizing the property from the Western Group of Forces. Colonel General (Gromov) was entrusted with coordinating the activities of the Defense Ministry and the commission, the operating staff and members of the commission were provided, handed over to the commission, and so on and so forth. Subsequently, on 7 July, I signed a letter to the president on the obstructions being created to hamper the commission's work, because working like this is unacceptable.

The president issued a decree. Accordingly, the defense minister introduced amendments into the decree and adopted a completely different line in using this commission.

Let us go further. On 13 July 1992, the defense minister issued order No. 96, again on coordinating the activities of the Western Group of Forces and the commission on utilizing the property of the Western Group of Forces. Further, on 27 July the president ordered the chief control department to inspect again the Western Group of Forces. Before this, accordingly, if we follow the chronology, on 10 August another government instruction was issued. On 16 September yet another government instruction was issued. On the 27th, subsequently, (Boldirev) submitted a report to the president about the wide-ranging corruption and economic crimes in the Western Group of Forces. However, again complete silence.

On 30 November, the president of the Russian Federation again issued a decree on the procedures for selling off and utilizing military property no longer in use. This gives the Defense Ministry the right to sell and utilize the released military property, except the arms and ammunition.

It is true that Boris Nikolayevich forbade (Boldirev) to give these documents to the vice president, and that I made two requests to see them.

There is a stenographic record and a recording taken at the session of the interdepartmental commission—incidentally, the prosecutor general was present at them—at which (Boldirev) said clearly and precisely: I did not go to the interdepartmental commission and I did not give you the documents, because Boris Nikolayevich [Yeltsin] forbade me to. He was referring to the documents resulting from the state commission's check on cases of mass corruption and economic crimes in the Western Group of Troops.

Let us go on. On 26 January, again my report on the situation that had taken shape in the Western Group of Troops. And at last here I am given instructions to get right to the bottom of things. So I start sorting things out.

On 27 January there is a letter to the president. On 26 January I am given orders to get to the bottom of things, but on 27 January there is a letter to the president from Defense Minister Pavel Sergeyevich [Grachev] proposing that the commission for utilizing the property of the Western Group of Troops be abolished. The reason given was that Germany and Russia have rejected claims on one another regarding compensation for losses.

Finally, after a high command session we managed to get a federal service set up under the president to monitor the utilization of the property and the withdrawal of the Western Group of Troops.

Then there is another series of decrees, more delays, and so on and so forth. It would take a long time to read. Once again, anyone who is interested is welcome to see all these documents for himself.

The last example in this chain—for the time allocated to my report is limited: Here one must go over to specific examples of corruption and economic crimes.

On 8 October, the president issued a decree forming an interdepartmental commission to combat crime and corruption. I cannot avoid mentioning this subject because the president recently told me to my face that I cannot cope with either agriculture or crime. Gavriil Kharitonovich Popov, his faithful supporter, also announced this in the pages of the press. Therefore, I have to read out information on how this interdepartmental commission was set up. You can see that it is quite thick.

Again I am reading: 8 October, decree of the president on measures to protect the rights of citizens and step up the fight against crime. An interdepartmental commission was formed, and as part of its framework the vice president is instructed to form a working apparatus to provide for the interdepartmental commission's work.

Once again, I draw your attention to the following. On 14 December, the setting up of an interdepartmental commission was approved by decision of the congress, and two months later the following commission, instructions from the president on preparations for and the holding of an all-Russia conference on the problems of combatting organized crime.

We prepared and held this meeting, and you know the results. They were quite good.

Four months later, another presidential decree was issued on a Russian Federation Security Council interdepartmental commission on fighting crime and corruption. Accordingly, the state committee for property and the security ministry were again reminded to provide the staff of the interdepartmental commission with communications, the appropriate electronics, vehicles, and accommodation to work in. You all understand that this work is connected with secrecy.

I will read out something else. Six months later another decree was issued. People wrote to the state committee for property and on several occasions telephoned directly Deputy Prime Minister Anatoliy Borisovich [Chubays]. Then they rang his deputies and wrote letters, and a further instruction was issued. Then they appealed to Filatov again. The end result is—I can name all these documents, you see there is a whole pile of them—that working conditions have not been created for the commission, nor has it been allocated communications, finances, equipment, transport, or accommodation.

What's going on? Maybe the government simply does not need bodies to protect Russia's economic interests and to fight crime, and it has an interest in its scandalous—I stress—irresponsibility and nonperformance continuing to form a beneficial basis for the plunder of the country. Or does it, nevertheless, concern itself with the good of the people?

Let us start with food. This year, the government plans to import food and raw materials for their production at a cost of more than $6 billion. At the same time, limits on the export of food products, excluding fish, are practically lifted by the government's instruction No. 854 of 6 November 1992. As regards fish—for the country's fishing fleet, fish has become simply a means of paying for repairs to vessels and fuel; it is being sold at dumping prices. Therefore the export price of fish, and in particular of cod, has fallen by a factor of 2 to 2.5, while prices in the country have risen by 300 to 800 times.

Despite the difficult food situation in the country, the administration of the alcohol industry has sharply increased the processing of food materials to produce spirits and alcohol products. Moreover, as of 1 October 1992 middlemen resold without orders—that is, without any accounting or control—632,000 decaliters of consumable spirit. As a result of this deal, the damage to the state is put at hundreds of millions of rubles.

In the context of the food problem, let us recall the famous Harvest-1990 check scheme: $1 billion was demanded for its implementation. For this, the government, beginning with Silayev and ending with Gaydar, generously handed out more than 200 licenses to export strategic raw materials with a value of more than $5 billion; that is for the whole five programs. According to the union of consumer cooperatives, goods were available to cover only slightly more than 50 percent of the checks.

A modest sum of $4.5 billion dollars has ended up in foreign banks. And now we weep with emotion when the United States allocates $700 million as a credit to purchase their grain. Those who made possible the speculation with the Harvest-90 checks are now successfully serving their sentence—these last words are in quotation marks, of course—at embassies and trade missions abroad or are prospering in commercial structures.

Vladimir Filippovich Shumeyko has taken the baton. On 14 January 1993 he issued an instruction regulating the debt—amounting to $9.4 million—to the (Waldheim Elektrik) firm of the Federal Republic of Germany. This amount, as you have probably guessed, was written off under the heading of Harvest-90. The instruction gives prominence to proposals by the Ministry of Fuel and Power Engineering and the Russian Economics Ministry which have not been considered by the government and the Finance Ministry.

Vladimir Filippovich independently resolved the problem and paid off the debt. But he wrote it off under the heading of the Harvest-90 checks. If the writing off of our debts under the heading of this program and the lining of others' pockets at the expense of state resources continue in the future, very soon we will have to beg to live.

I think it is time Prime Minister Viktor Stepanovich Chernomyrdin put an end to this problem, to the Harvest-90 checks, and won back the rural citizens' trust in state.

I have repeatedly written on this matter to the president, and I have approached the government, but of course, to no avail.

And I was not the only one to write about the Harvest-90 program. The security and interior ministers did as well. And everyone knows perfectly well who was doing what, who was giving licenses, what assets ended up in foreign banks, and what assets came back. But to date no proceedings have been instigated against the main culprits of this crime.

What is being done with the program on humanitarian aid which we are receiving from abroad? Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Nikolayevich Shokhin is responsible for this. The work of the commission under his leadership incurred losses of R12 million during 1992. And if you add to that payments to staff and numerous trips abroad and the aid which should have been sent to those in need, then, by modest estimates, R40 billion has been stuffed into the pockets of speculators.

It becomes clear from the information on the commission's financial activities that there are virtually no bank documents showing where this aid went, no accountancy papers and so on. So hundreds of thousands of people hoping to get this aid were simply left out. If these people [commission members] are not condemned by men on this earth, at least they should be morally condemned.

Attempts by Minister Pamfilova, who was in charge of checking the work of this commission on the government's instruction, to introduce some order, have been unsuccessful and did not yield any results. Perhaps the Supreme Soviet and the Procuracy might be able to help Aleksandr Nikolayevich Shokhin.

But the detrimental consequences for Russia of the governmental structures' activities are especially flagrant in the foreign economic sphere. Foreign trade has practically ceased to bring any income to the state. According to data from the Central Bank, the value of Russia's exports amounted to $38 billion in 1992, yet only $11 billion returned to the country. In January and February 1993, out of $2.5 billion worth of exports, only $800 million were received in revenue.

This is no wonder, when you consider, for instance, Gaydar's government instruction No. 957 dated 27 May 1992. This freed the joint Russian-Canadian enterprise Komi-Arctic-Oil from the obligation to pay customs duty on the exports of oil extracted by that enterprise from 1 January 1992 until it recovers its investment in increasing oil production as compared with the expected extraction. Bide your time, as they say.

There are other government instructions permitting companies to keep up to 50 percent of sales proceeds in foreign banks. And there are many such government resolutions. There are not just one or two of them, there are dozens; in fact, the number is close on 100.

Resolution No. 537 of 3 August 1992, signed by Gaydar, allows the Urals Trading House from Yekaterinburg to sell on internal and external markets 50 percent of precious metals and precious stones extracted from the waste products of processing industry enterprises. I wish you could see these waste products! Naturally, the government resolution of 4 January 1992, signed by Boris Nikolayevich, which proclaims a state monopoly on the sales of these raw materials on the external market, was promptly forgotten.

I can read out these resolutions for you if you wish; I have them here.

Esteemed deputies! It is no secret today that the country's gold reserve fluctuates between 150-200 tonnes of gold. In essence this is the final reserve of insurance for Russia's financial system, a source of an important raw material for the radio-electronics industry. However on 5 March 1992 an instruction—I stress an instruction, not a Supreme Soviet resolution, not a government resolution, but a simple instruction signed by Gaydar, set the Central Bank the task of selling 25 tons of gold with the aim of providing credits to enterprises and associations in the gold-extraction industry. But judging from what the gold-prospectors said during the recent visit to Magadan by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, and in dozens of appeals to me, one can only guess where that gold—or the money from its sale—is today. The gold- prospectors, to all appearances, did not get it.

Now we come to a very curious instruction. Once again it is an instruction, not a Supreme Soviet resolution, not a government resolution, but a mere government instruction, and once again it is signed by Yegor

Timurovich [Gaydar]. The State Committee for Precious Metals and Stones under the Ministry of Economy and Finance is instructed to allocate to the Russian Federation's Foreign Trade Bank 31,041 kg of pure gold in the first quarter, to be sold for hard currency on the external market. Let us now look at the invoice. In this invoice from the Russian Federation's Foreign Trade Bank, the weight of the gold is for some reason said to be 33 tons. Let us look at the next invoice, the Aeroflot one; this shows 32,866 kg. The next invoice shows 33 tons. So how many tons of gold were exported after all, 25 plus 31, or 33?

In a similarly cavalier fashion, instruction No. 87 of 16 January 1992 gives a go-ahead for the transfer to a Russian-Israeli enterprise, (Sofijam), of 30 kg of raw emeralds for processing and selling the end product on the external market. This is a gift worth several million dollars.

Meanwhile, Russia's defaulted payments on its external debt in 1992 amounted to $12 billion. With such debts, the government still provides preferential terms to numerous structures, some of very dubious origin, and exempts them from paying export duties to the value of almost $3 billion. The people who signed most of these instructions are Gaydar, Shokhin, Burbulis, and Shumeyko.

Another fine example. In contravention of government instructions, Anisimov and Vozhagov, the heads of the Ministry of Trade and Resources, have given a monopoly right to carry out exports and imports operations with the total volume of 700 to 740 million dollars to a joint Russian-Finnish-Swiss enterprise, (Sovek); and that with virtually no system of monitoring from the Russian side.

Last year, the company exported abroad raw material resources from Russia's state reserve worth hundreds of millions of dollars. But let us look at what we got in exchange: tinned meat worth $2.2 million, and of dubious quality, mind you. I leave it to you to calculate the difference between $2.2 million and $740 million.

In October 1992, in the course of negotiations in India on oil purchases within the framework of intergovernment agreements, Comrade Shibayev, a deputy minister of foreign economic relations, included two representatives in the delegation, and demanded that in concluding the deal they agree to a substantial discount for the buyer. Russia sustained so-called modest losses to the tune of $30 million. Shibayev's representatives demanded for this $5 for every barrel of oil. Taking the volume of the deal into account, this amounts to nearly $30 million, as I have already said.

And where do you think Shibayev is now? Not hard to guess. He is Russia's trade representative in Finland. The same is true of his predecessors: Yaroshenko is in France and Filshin in Austria—you remember the Harvest-90 checks? With this sum of money, he will not be cold, even in the Far North.

Incidentally, he also offered the services of a British national, (Norman Sitthi), to prepare the Russian president's visit to India. India actually wants this gentleman extradited as a common criminal. Earlier, this Mr. (Sitthi) was a go-between when our specialists were building a works worth $4 billion in India. There, Shibayev concluded a contract, made a discount of two percent of the value of the works, this is 20 times more than is usual in foreign economic operations. In the end, once again we lost a modest sum of $78 million, and no one knows where it went.

Another very revealing story is that of the so-called red mercury. It reflects very well the state of our foreign economic activities and behind-the-scenes games surrounding it.

The president's instruction—I can read it out—No. 75 of 21 February 1992 bears an endorsement of just one person, the ideologist of democracy, Mr. Burbulis. I'm reading it out. If there were at least... [pauses] Let me read it out for you after all. No, don't let's read it. If it becomes necessary, I will read it out. It grants a certain firm called Industrial Ecology [Promekologiya] the right to sell 10 tons of mercury, red mercury. I will tell you about its price later. And look how the events developed from there, from the president's instruction. That was earlier: No. 1167, of 22 October 1991.

On 28 October I sent this document... [pauses] You see, I had been instructed to investigate this question and to assist, if this would help. Well, it had to be investigated, as you appreciate. It's a serious matter. Substantial amounts and substantial prices were involved. So, I sent this document to the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation. The document is being kept here, and so is the reply from the Supreme Soviet's commission. I also sent it to appropriate departments for their reaction. I wanted to know why this was being done. That was on 28 October, I stress. A correspondence ensued, and eventually the decree—the directive, rather—was issued on 21 February 1922 [as heard].

You may ask whether there really is such a thing as red mercury. Does it exist or can it exist in nature as some kind of physical substance? This is in point of fact an extremely valuable strategic raw material. Therefore, I cannot understand why a Yekaterinburg-based commercial organization called Industrial Ecology, which nobody has ever heard of, should have obtained a monopoly right to sell it. This organization has a staff of 10-15 people and an authorized capital of R30,000.

However, there is an interesting letter from Mr. Sadykov, the chairman of this firm, in which he makes a proposal and discloses that his firm had R250 billion at its disposal. At that time, in 1991, R250 billion was a substantial amount, I think. So that modest undertaking got going with the help of this R250 billion. An active exchange of correspondence followed. There are all sorts of things like that here. Those measures got under way.

Incidentally there is another puzzling thing here. The staff of this venture, Industrial Ecology, deprived Sadykov, their colleague, of the right to sign financial documents. It is also hard to understand whom our leading academicians, chemists, and other equally qualified and authoritative people in the Ministry of Security and the security services can have been working for when they claimed that red mercury does not exist and cannot exist, and that there is nothing connected with it.

This business has been going on for two years already. If you study the documents carefully, and I think the prosecutor's office will do so, you will see that this is nothing but speculation. Its objective was to exploit the big, multibillion deals which were promised, as a screen for international financial machinations, motivated by foreign companies' need for huge ruble holdings with which to privatize enterprises in the Russian Federation.

How did this Sadykov manage to launch a fraud on this scale, even if he did have the support of Burbulis? And what actually was exported, since there are licences, contracts, agreements, and expense claims among these papers? There is also a reference to some other mysterious substances priced at between—wait for it—$150,000 and $400,000 per kilogram. That's for just one kilogram!

I have already said that there was evidence: contracts of local enterprises and foreign firms. One can even say that there were official addresses there. Perhaps valuable strategic materials with a density of 20 grams per cubic centimeter, some might remember—platinum, gold, osmium, iridium, and plutonium. Components for nuclear explosives also fit here.

At the same time, what amazes me is the following. So many people warned Burbulis both verbally and in writing—Barannikov, Primakov, and Yerin. But he carried on actively and passionately.

Here is yet another important example of how they tried to entangle me in this filth. At the recent Congress, Mr. Filatov, head of the president's administration, gave me an instruction relating to the above problem with my signature under it, with a reference number; everything was as it should be. It looked as if I had signed the documents on red mercury.

Mr. Filatov did not take one thing into account. I have a bad habit of reading documents before I sign them. And my parents, though my mother was called a sow in the STOLITSA magazine, endowed me with a good memory. When the paper was checked, a dirty forgery was revealed. The signature was photocopied and in the computer network a document on land problem was registered under this reference number but under different data.

Thank God, the president on 20 March 1993 canceled his instruction of 21 February 1992 on industrial ecology with the assistance of the not unknown Sergey Aleksandrovich Filatov, because it was simply the limit. I am convinced that if the matter is investigated in full, the explosion of red mercury will be worse than the current scandals in the Italian capital.

Esteemed deputies, particular disquiet is aroused by the processes going on in our Army. It is painful and difficult for me as someone who comes from the armed forces, where I spent my whole childhood and 24 years in service, to talk about this, because I do not remember anything like this before. But it is necessary to talk in order to halt the disintegration of our armed forces. On the background of its constant problems a new one has grown up—universal theft. The registered theft of military property, military equipment, weapons, and ammunition alone makes up half of all crime in the Armed Forces.

In some districts illegal commercial activity is prospering, the scale of which is beyond definition. Some officials from the top command staff—I will give their names later—are members of numerous joint stock companies, small enterprises, and associations. These are involving military property, equipment, and financial assets of the Defense Ministry in illegal circulation. Enriching themselves personally, they are inflicting enormous material and unprecedented moral damage to the armed forces by their activity and provoking a negative reaction from officers, noncommissioned officers, and soldiers who do not have even the most basic living and serving conditions. Naturally, it is not only servicemen who suffer from this but their families as well.

In the Baltic Fleet, over 60 officers were involved in this sort of activity. And General (Proskurin), the commander of naval aviation, and General (Volkov), the chief navigation officer, became employees of a commercial firm, for which the naval transport planes under their command performed commercial flights.

In the Far Eastern Military District, 56 commercial structures have been recorded, naturally set up not by colonels, lieutenant colonels, majors or else lieutenants, God forbid! They were set up by Colonel General (Novozhilov), an ex-commander of the Far Eastern Military District, who is now head of a college for training commanders for the Russian Army called Vystrel [Salvo]. Military equipment and property has been stolen and sold for a song, hundreds of trucks from emergency stores, summer houses, and holiday homes.

General (Smyshnikov), commander of the 11th Air Defense Army, and generals (Kuznetsov) and (Saulov), corps commanders, did not lag too far behind the district commander, as they founded a commercial structure Alpha-92. Strange as it may seem, all these generals are still in service. Here is fight against corruption and crime in the forces for you!

In connection with these Far Eastern dealings, I sent interdepartmental commissions and a working group there, and they brought back quite an amount of material. I reported this to the president but nothing at all has been decided.

The most shameless plundering is going on in the Western Group of Forces. A short while ago you read a letter from the commander of the Western Group of Forces, written to justify himself.

And again, here is an interesting thing. I have made a little, modest selection of facts. These are documents, which I could read to you now, revealing what is really taking place there. I am talking of the sale and misuse of the military equipment and property being released in the Western Group of Forces, due to lack of control of numerous structures. I have told you how this commission was set up, how it worked, what sort of environment it had to work in, and how many times the control directorate has warned the president of the outrageous violations of law taking place there. You know, of course, that we have a Security Ministry, a Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, a Defense Ministry, and our wonderful Committee for the Management of State Property. In fact, this robbery was simply encouraged.

Real estate is being used in violation of the accord concluded with the German side. A multitude of buildings, structures, dwelling houses, and warehouse premises are being leased free of charge to German or Russian commercial structures. I will cite just one example. At the request of [Lyudmila] Zykina [a famous singer], Aleksandr Borisovich Chubays handed over to the Russian Cultural Center 20 buildings in Berlin, with an area of over 10,000 square meters. A certain Nikolay Ivanovich Korovin, representing the little known commercial structures (Mokat) and (Oka), received free of charge more than 70 facilities, houses, shops, and warehouses. We have it all here.

Even when property is leased out, real money is not paid into the account of the Western Group of Forces. The (Spernberg) Housing Management Unit concluded contracts worth DM9 million, but actually received just DM75,000. There is some difference between 9 million and 75,000. There is no supervision whatsoever over housing space available. Apartments are plundered. Immigrants from the Commonwealth of Independent States are squatting there illegally. This exacerbates the situation with crime, and causes resentment on the part of the local population.

Out of the entire 777—remember this figure—military cantonments with a total value of DM10.5 billion, over 400 with a value of DM4 billion have been handed over. However, no payment for them has been made. The handover of expensive facilities—airfields, test ranges, and warehouses—has not started at all. True, with one stroke of Yevgeniy Ivanovich Shaposhnikov's pen, 12 first-rate airfields were handed over to the highly shady state commercial association Propumet in the person of Mr. Pork, Arnold Yakovlevich. And they really are first-rate, for I know them all from the time when I served in the Western Group of Forces in the eighties. Those who really benefit from this state of universal collapse and pillaging are all sorts of shady dealers, who make a fortune from the current mess.

For example, an international concern called Housing Conversion—or shall I say Humbug Conversion—which was to carry out a project to build housing for servicemen, received from the Defense Ministry three tank-repair works, four motor-vehicle works, and two equipment depots with residential quarters, all as a share in the capital fund. Instead of resolving the issues connected with implementing the project, the management of the concern began to sell out cheaply the real estate it had received. I guess you can imagine what the real price of these facilities is.

All these activities are arousing the dissatisfaction of the official German authorities, which regard them as violations of the accord reached on the conditions for the withdrawal of our troops from Germany. There has been much coverage of this issue on television and in other German mass media.

It is a matter of shame for us when Germany's police and security services start fighting our corruption and open thievery. Moreover, the very idea of using the funds from the marketing of the property of the Western Group of Troops for the social needs of servicemen is being discredited. Not only Army but also high government officials are stretching out their hands at the Russian property on German territory.

By a stroke of Poltoranin's pen, on 6 May last year, the huge building of the Russian House of Science and Culture in the center of Berlin, which has a surface area of 29,000 square meters and a total market value of over DM500 [as heard], almost found itself handed over free of charge to the German firm Friedrichstrasse. On behalf of the Russian Federation Government, permission to use the house was given—again, by Comrade Poltoranin personally—to a German citizen, Hoffman. Then other high-ranking individuals, in particular, the same Shokhin, Chubays, and Kozyrev, enter the struggle to control a share of the pie, not for themselves, of course, but on the president's instructions.

Yet again, anyone interested in this whole comedy can read the original documents of what is happening beyond the bounds of the law.

But Poltoranin does not give up. Again he personally issues a new authorization, now to his acquaintance Baygarov, who in parallel received powers from the same German firm to run the house. Fortunately, the German side has not accepted effective documents, and thus far the house in Berlin still belongs to Russia.

I am totally convinced that behind the back of the president of the Russian Federation Mr. Poltoranin is carrying out illegal deals, and this is true not only of the Western Group of Forces. There are lots such examples in Moscow.

Esteemed deputies! Many words have been spoken in this hall about the importance and value of privatization. We have heard the ode to a voucher with which the State Committee for Property promised everyone at least two Volga cars. But I think that in a conversation on this problem one cannot get round the concrete fact that during the people's—I stress the word—privatization, it is the people who remain without property.

I will give a few examples from the various activities of Mr. Chubays and his department of representatives and followers in the provinces. We all know that the Luzhniki sports complex in Moscow was auctioned for the price of 25 Zhiguli cars and has been turned into a large flea-market and rubbish dump.

The port of Nakhodka—yesterday there was a committee session and we looked at the ports, and I can also read out interesting figures, if there are any questions about what is happening. Does Russia exist as a naval power? The answer is no. They have already succeeded in pilfering all of it.

For example, the commercial port of Nakhodka was privatized for R18.444 million [hubbub in hall]. Although the price set on the port by the State Committee for the Management of State Property is just as ridiculous—it turns out that the port of Nakhodka is worth R70 million.

But, is there any elementary common sense? Do people have any idea of what they are doing to the state?

A similar price also has been set on the shipping fleet—R20 million, R30 million, R30 million, and R10 million on shipyards. But I am telling you that this is just impossible. Well, I have taken just one portfolio. But they ought to be brought here in their hundreds, in their hundreds: there is no room for them in my office any more. [indistinct voice from hall]

Let's move on. This is namely how much was invested in the basic assets. And R17.446 million was invested in the basic assets accordingly. Having received the right to operate commercially, accordingly, the port went fully over to commercial operation. That's to say, that port—let me compare it with the Zhigulis that were auctioned off for the price of four Zhiguli motor vehicles. Protests by the minister of transport of the Russian Federation—I have them here in my hand—over the unlawful privatization of ports, whose administration is headed by [Anatoliy] Chubays, deputy chairman of the government—were not taken into account.

I notice the following headline appeared in IZVESTIYA recently: An interview with esteemed Mr. Chubays. Everything must be done to ensure that the vice president stops interfering in the activities of the State Committee for the Management of State Property. By way of comparison, I will mention a cinema in Moscow which was privatized—again let's compare the price with that of the Zhigulis—of 10 Zhigulis—and then turned into a depot. On the whole, not one of these facilities even attained the value of seven of the latest Mercedes.

They attempted to auction off Russia's only international airport, Sheremetyevo. Imagine the airport—136 planes, including two A-310's recently bought at a price of $20 million dollars; the huge airport building, [word indistinct], stores, the navigation equipment, the airport building itself. All this was valued at R2.5 billion rubles. A letter was written to me in time and I intervened in this situation and stopped this process. But how many such processes are going on now in Russia? The Russian Federation's unified transport system is being completely destroyed. Regardless of who tries to convince me—including you Anatoliy Borisovich [Chubays]—that this is not being done intentionally, I unambiguously state here, all this is being done intentionally. And I will prove this to you in any court [applause]

The State Committee for the Management of State Property of Russia did not take into account the opinion of the Ministry of Transport; either on securing federal property for the controlling interest in the Murmansk maritime port, to which the entire Russian atomic ice-breaker fleet belongs. I would show you a photograph of what just one year of commercial operation has done to the atomic ice-breaking fleet. And just imagine how much these ships cost! They are now completely unfit for use.

In other words the joint-stock company which has been created administers the atomic ice-breaker fleet. There is no regulated legal relation with the state, which of course causes economic damage and may cause not only economic damage, but moral and physical damage. It is an atomic fleet. In precisely the same way a representative of that same committee of state property in St. Petersburg, Mr. Bure, proposed the privatization of the Baltic sea shipping company for a sum half of the book value. Once again modest figures. Seventy million rubles and everything's fine. What can I say about the legality of the actions of this department in privatizing ports, if the Russian Federation justice ministry has given a decision that the 16 September 1992 state committee for property instruction, number 444r, which regulates the privatization of ports, does not have legal force since it is not registered in the order established by the Russian Federation Government?

But absolutely no action was taken and this whole bacchanalia is created by this instruction. They issued another additional instruction—number 70C—without the agreement of the Transport Ministry, explaining this by saying that the state committee for property is not obliged to agree such documents with the transport ministry. Democratic Choice, not by chance, threw itself into defending the leader of the state committee for state property. They have been particularly active in recent days since they pass privatization off as virtually the only achievement of the reforms so far. But you yourselves see how this privatization is going in the Chelyabinsk case. Bags of vouchers are being bought up and brought along, and they are trying to take the metallurgical combine from the people of Russia and the work collective. Of course someone may say you, Aleksandr Vladimirovich, talk about corruption in the highest levels of authority. But I am talking here in outline, because I understand time is limited, and later there will be time to study all these crimes in more detail.

But various materials appear about one in the newspapers talking, among other things, about links with the Renewal Foundation. You know how many times it has been reported in the Congress, in the Supreme Soviet, in the papers. Maybe you also have your snout in the trough. In recent months there really have been articles hinting at this on more than one occasion, and I don't rule out new ones especially after this speech. First of all I want to remind you that the Renewal Foundation's first president was none other than Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin himself. Then I had to head this foundation, and only in autumn in 1991 did I relinquish these activities because a new administration was elected, and it worked on social issues. Although, I say again, there is a mass of documents and proof that the foundation carried out and is carrying out genuinely useful activities.

Those who wish can familiarize themselves with the Fund's documents in accordance with the established procedure and satisfy themselves that there is simply not a single document with my signature relating to the Fund's financial or, moreover, commercial activity. Incidentally, the results of several financial checks carried out by the Security Ministry, the Interior Ministry, and bank structures over the last year confirmed the same fact.

I will draw the following conclusion from all the above. It is time to begin to investigate what former and present state officials in the government who have gone too far have got up to and give each his just desserts. It is time to halt the tradition of these people leaving their posts without responsibility and to revive personal responsibility for actions regardless of rank. [applause] It is proposed to create for this a special Russian Federation Supreme Soviet investigative commission and immediately—immediately before things are hushed up—include in its composition the inter-departmental commission on fighting crime and corruption, which I head, because we have been working actively for a long time. This request is connected to the fact that I, and I emphasize this, genuinely desire to bring the work that has begun to a logical conclusion. It is necessary to show Russia who actually betrayed it, who is guilty of the collapse of the economy—the people's deputies or those who smear others so as to remain in power and continue to plunder the country and carry out lawlessness.

After all, it is no coincidence that many of the people I have mentioned are fiercely campaigning in support of the referendum. They are anxious to win with the sole goal of burying traces and finally legalizing the mafia-state machinery. We have to stop them, esteemed people's deputies, and this is our joint task.

I hope that now, after my speech, you will understand considerably better why a blatant and impudent campaign of lies and insults has been unleashed recently against the Russian Federation vice president who was also elected by all the people. It has been initiated by the president's press secretary and the head of his administration and now joined by the head of the president's body- guard who, incidentally, was promoted from the rank of major to major-general within 18 months. This persecution has been going on for almost 20 months and is linked, first of all, with the fact that in my post of vice president and, subsequently, also chairman of the inter-departmental commission for combatting crime and corruption, I came across instances of incredible plundering of national wealth in which quite high-placed figures from the state apparatus took part and are taking part.

I have been and still am opposed to their attempts to drive the country to complete impoverishment. I have written many times—this again can be corroborated by documents—and reported to the president, and approached the Ministry of Security and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, trying to stop this outrageous lawlessness. As you can well see, this has not produced any reaction. They are the most interested party as far as preserving the current policy of reforms is concerned, because it plays into their pocket and into the pocket of their fervent supporters—speculators and rogues who have nothing to do with business. It is they who object to implement reforms with social prioritizing. As a matter of fact, the people of Russia were robbed twice in the past year, through shock therapy and price liberalization on the one hand, and through the unchecked leaking to foreign countries of money and raw materials. I gave you the figure, $17 billion, and that is at today's dollar exchange rate.

Do you remember the promises that the dollar will be worth 80 rubles? R760 —that is virtually a gross national product. If we add up the gross national product of R15 trillion we used to have and another 15, then would Russia be living in such utterly difficult conditions today? This is why these tags of an anti-market politician, an opponent of reform are being attached to me, and judging by what Boris Nikolayevich says I have already turned into a prominent opponent of private farming. It takes some thinking to invent this—did I ever say that I was an ardent opponent of private farming? I defend it all the time when I say that people should not be deceived—if we have embarked on this policy, then money should be allocated, equipment and building materials should be earmarked. I have spoken everywhere about this. Soon a chronological table of the vice president's work on agriculture will be published in SELSKAYA ZHIZN. To 184 suggestions and a detailed program of reform in the agro-industrial complex there has been no response, zero reaction.

I'd like to take this opportunity today to state unambiguously that I am not about to resign and that I will not react to any kind of provocative action. [applause] I was elected just as Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin was, on the same nationwide ticket. Only the people can decide my fate. But I haven't heard any demand for my resignation from the people yet. However much Gennadiy Eduardovich Burbulis and his crowd try to find anticonstitutional statements in my articles and speeches, or to seek out a history of illness and injury in Afghanistan with the object of identifying my psychological state, I assure you that absolutely nothing will come of it. For this reason, esteemed people's deputies, I shall continue to work, and I am relying on your support and that of all Russians.

Everything was brought into play here, including my so-called privileges. I take responsibility for stating that I never asked for any special bodyguard to be allocated to me, let alone a huge retinue. I never asked for any castles to be built for me, with bullet-proof glass, underground garages, winter tennis courts and summer ... [pauses] winter gardens. No cavalcade of armored cars ever follows me. I understand that 250 personal bodyguards are unnecessary as are the 11,000 employees of the bodyguard directorate who cost the state budget R15,000 million. I have probably been confused with someone else. Literally, there were statements by both Kostikov and the democratic press this morning, and I see that even the chief of the president's bodyguard has joined in with them. I have been muddled with someone else. I have probably been muddled with that greater fighter against privileges. [loud applause] Such accusations against me are simply a mistake.

I understand that there are people who would like to create the impression that the vice president is just a third-rate official who does not represent the Russian state. But if I, as vice president of Russia, have been given the task of combatting crime and corruption then, again, those who set me this task probably have a clear understanding of the possible risk. Is a bodyguard of 12 a lot compared with 11,000 and 250 personal guards? They work a shift system of three men per day.

Is it a privilege that finally, a month ago, my Mercedes—which was worn out because it was made in 1972 and came from Brezhnev's collection and had finally fallen to bits—was replaced and I was given another Mercedes which they took from Ruslan Imranovich [Khasbulatov] and gave to me. This one was made in 1980. Now it, too, is undergoing repairs. Yesterday I was given a Volga. Today I came out and there was a different Volga. I asked what had happened to the Volga I had yesterday. It is in for repairs again.

Now, about my dacha. Is it a luxury to live in one which was built in 1905 and which seems never to have been repaired at all, as anyone who has been to visit me will have seen the whole picture. By the way, unlike the fighter for [as heard] privileges, I pay the going rate of R4,500 per month for it.

Everything that I have said on this subject is not meant as justification and, for God's sake, do not think that I am asking anyone for anything. I want everyone to know the truth from the horse's mouth, that is from me, personally, and not from attempts at discrediting me and speculation in the official press. If anyone insists then I can give up the remaining three men I have been left with, which amounts to one man per shift.

Esteemed People's deputies, the campaign of slander against people's deputies including myself fails to take account of one thing, that I do not ask life for an easy path and that I have seen everything. I have seen everything in this life. I cannot be frightened. Of course, I have human feelings, purely human feelings, for my family, but I think that everything will be fine.

Thank you all for your attention. I am now ready to answer any of your questions. [applause]

Rutskoy Answers Questions

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[Question and answer session featuring Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy, moderated by First Vice Chairman Yuriy Voronin, at a Supreme Soviet session in Moscow on 16 April; from the "At the Supreme Soviet Session" program—recorded]

[Text] [Voronin] Microphone one, go ahead please.

[Rebrikov] Aleksandr Vladimirovich, Deputy Rebrikov, 23d constituency of Moscow. Aleksandr Vladimirovich, in light of the figures mentioned by you, it is possible that the sum of 6 trillion rubles appears to be modest, but this is precisely the sum that was established by the group of experts and your specialists that was working with me on what agriculture has not received and what the government owes from 1989 until present. This sum means that in 1991 and 1992, as much as 30 percent of agricultural produce was not harvested. It remained in the fields, and now it will never reach our tables. No humanitarian aid can replace that. A report on the materials was conveyed to you. As far as I know you twice made a report on those materials to the president. All this was described by the group of experts as economic sabotage. Therefore, I would like to ask you the following: Twice you reported on these materials to the president. What was the reaction of the president and the government to whom a report on these materials was made?

[Rutskoy] I do not know what their reaction was, but at the present time a group is working on those documents that were received by the interdepartmental commission, and it is preparing to travel directly to the locations concerned. Correspondingly, they have already visited two oblasts—Kursk Oblast and Lipetsk Oblast, and they then intend to make checks in accordance with your report.

[Deputy] Esteemed vice president, your brilliant speech made a great impression on me as it did on all the deputies, including the report that you have an huge amount of materials in your office testifying to the crimes of officials and members of staff in the commercial structures. I would like to put a question to you. How many of the materials that you have at your disposal regarding those scoundrels who pilfer the property of the people have you handed over to the procurator general? How many cases have been instituted? And what has the outcome been? Thank you.

[Rutskoy] The procurator himself will make a report. One case has been handed over for the moment. Now you will see that all those materials are being prepared. They need to be systematized, one has to make an investigation before handing over something somewhere. At the present time, let's say, we can hand over the material on red mercury. It has been completely systematized so it can be handed over to the procuracy and a petition can be presented to the procuracy.

But I have told you that there is not enough money and equipment. An interdepartmental committee has not been formed.

[Deputy] Thank you. I am satisfied with your reply.

[Voronin] Please go ahead.

[Chernov] Chernov, 252d constituency. This is probably more of a proposal than a question: Will you have any objection if our democratic press, such as IZVESTIYA and the other newspapers, publish your speech in full?

[Rutskoy] I will even say thank you. They will not do it. I am sure of that.

[Chernov] I think the democratic press will do that today.

[Rutskoy] But then it is democratic.

[Chernov] Thank you, thank you.

[Chelnokov] Chelnokov, 16th constituency. Aleksandr Vladimirovich, in my opinion, in spite of the fact that enormous impediments have been placed in your path, you have done a huge amount of work and, excuse me, but I am very grateful to you for that. In this respect, I would like to ask you two questions: First, what do you think of the legal situation in Moscow as regards corruption, privatization, and the infinite lawlessness in general, in particular in connection with the business authorities in Moscow and with the fact that Moscow is governed by citizen Luzhkov, whose status is vague. And the second question: Allow me to ask it right away. I would make a proposal to the Supreme Soviet; I would like to know your reaction to that. Yuriy Vladimirovich, excuse me, Yuriy Mikhailovich, excuse me for God's sake, I will make the proposal at the same time. I think that an undertaking should be signed by individuals mentioned in the report in connection with crimes that they will not leave the country—first and foremost by Chubays. Thank you.

[Rutskoy] As far as the first question is concerned, I would not like to give any details, all the more so about individuals. As far as privatization and auction sales in Moscow are concerned, that is a terrible subject about which a great deal needs to be said. You simply cannot imagine what it is like.

[Voronin] All right, microphone three, go ahead please.

[Krasavchenko] Thank you. Krasavchenko, fifth national constituency. Esteemed Aleksandr Vladimirovich: I have two questions, and I am also hoping as always for your clear-cut replies to them. First, since you said everything has been systematized regarding each subject that you have dealt with here and it will not be very difficult to give a reply. The first question relates to the fact that the growth in crime which is being observed—that is the first part of your report—is directly connected with the economic reform, the shock therapy, which was applied in our country. My question is the following, and in connection with this that the shadow economy has taken on colossal dimensions. My question is: first, which elements of this economic reform have called forth a particular growth in crime, compared with the situation that existed before the so-called shock therapy? And to what extent has the share of the shadow economy in the gross national product of our country grown, and what has the effect of it been? That is the first question.

[Rutskoy] All right, all right, all right, all right.

[Krasavchenko] Can I go on, Aleksandr Vladimirovich? Because it is very serious.

[Rutskoy] Let us deal with them in order. I will answer you immediately and then you can ask the other question. Regarding the first question, there is an extremely direct link between crime and the economy, for economic relations in society are criminal ones. They are not market relations but criminal ones, because an accumulation of capital is taking place at the expense of pilfered strategic resources of the state and black marketeering with food and consumer goods produced by state enterprises. That is, the economy and crime are directly tied with one another. Furthermore, the population's income compared with 1990 has been halved—and you are for all that an economist and you understand why there is such a situation. If we compare prices with incomes in 1990 and this year, then you, those who support reform so fervently and impetuously, the so-called reform—it is not reform, the so-called reform—have put people in intolerable conditions. I would also like to give you the minimum wage that you propose, 4,250 rubles, and isolate you from absolutely everything and accompany you to the stores, and I would like see how you would manage to live on that. That is, you have deliberately forced people to go and steal things. This is where crime comes from.

[Krasavchenko] And regarding the shadow economy?

[Rutskoy] The shadow economy has grown three times—three times because it is permitted by you, allowed by you—free selling without registration of trading premises and without cash control systems or a taxation system. You have permitted that. Mr. Burbulis was fervently supported by you at the time.

[Krasavchenko] Well, my question to you is the following: first, do you acknowledge the property of the CPSU—it had legal status. That is the first thing. Second, who stole it and how did they do it? From organizations and the elite?

[Rutskoy] Now I will name, I will name... [deputies shout]

[Krasavchenko] That is very important.

[Rutskoy] Okay, I will name them for you. First of all, the CPSU: national property—on the whole it is state property. So a Supreme Soviet decision....[Rutskoy changes thought] and I do not doubt that this investigative group will be created; that is, the right will be given to the working apparatus of the interdepartmental commission to have a legal-investigative commission. One of the most important themes will be how the Mr. Democrats stole and pilfered CPSU property without giving it to the people. Then they all cried in unison: Hand over the CPSU's loot to the people. So give it to the people.

[Filippov] Filippov, constituency 116. Mr. Vice President, I can only agree with you that a significant number of state enterprises are plundering state capital with state servants, and transferring it to the accounts of, as they say, the nomenclature of private firms. In this connection the question arises: How can this process be overcome? One way is to destroy all private firms, then there will be nowhere to transfer to. The second way is to give the possibility to people, citizens, to become the owners of state enterprises—it is well known that you cannot steal that much from the owner. So I have not understood from your speech—maybe you will clear it up—do you prefer to hand over state enterprises to citizens, that is privatize them, or, on the contrary, close private enterprises and halt the privatization process? Which of these two choices is closer to your heart?

[Rutskoy] Why go to extremes? You yourselves well understand what you are calling privatization today is not privatization, but pilfering. You understand it is pilfering with the opportunity of laundering the plundered money. An example: Chelyabinsk. Look who brought the vouchers. Well, if you consider that to be privatization, I do not. If you consider the privatization of Russia's ports, as it has been carried out, I don't consider it to be privatization. Why? Because there is the law; there is the law and it is the law that should regulate current economic relations, especially economic relations that arise during the reforms. There is no system that controls the current economic processes and the progress of the reforms, because there is a complete lack of a control system. I will again be smeared that I am speaking in favor of the revival of the administrative command system. No, no way. I am speaking in favor of a civilized market where the control and regulation mechanisms are based on laws and economic stimuli. But what is happening today is without control. Excuse me, I look at what the citizens—who you are so concerned about—are getting out of it.

[Travnikov] Travnikov, Supreme Soviet member. I have this question: According to our present legislation, you have 11 suitcases of particularly dangerous crimes committed by state officials. That is according to the legislation you are a direct co-participant by keeping the material to yourself and not handing it over to the bodies that should investigate them. And—just a second, be quiet, I do not have a strong voice.

[Voronin] Attention.

[Travnikov] Yes, listen. Only a court can appraise these materials, no one else. Therefore the question was right—how much material have you given to the procuracy. You have 11 suitcases; my impression is that all your activities have been devoted to collecting the material for these 11 suitcases. Thank you.

[Rutskoy] I will answer you. Of course I deeply regret that over 34 years you have not figured out jurisprudence, I deeply regret that. [applause] But I will reply to you that as vice president, in accordance with a presidential decree, I was appointed the chairman of the interdepartmental commission on fighting crime and corruption. That is, I have the right to work on this. Because the president is the state's supreme official. I am appointed chairman. Officials are on the interdepartmental commission. I have told you who. And if the interdepartmental commission examines any question, then I do not make a personal decision. The permanent members make decisions, and the members called up the interdepartmental commission. Now about these materials, I have told you that on 8 October—and that is practically—count it—more than six months—the interdepartmental commission was created and I was put on it. It is a small group of five people, five specialists who know jurisprudence well, don't doubt it, because, for example it is headed by Lieutenant General (Zaygo), the first deputy military procurator in the USSR Defense Ministry. I think his professional level is appropriate. Therefore, we accordingly began to systematize everything so as to report on it. And by the decision of the Supreme Soviet it was proposed to the chairman of the interdepartmental commission to report to the Supreme Soviet about the state of affairs and the interdepartmental commission's work.

More Questions, Answers

LD1704141393 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1021 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Question and answer session featuring Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy, moderated by First Vice Chairman Yuriy Voronin, at a session of the Supreme Soviet in Moscow—live; broadcast in progress]

[Text] [Voronin] So, esteemed members of the Supreme Soviet. Well, Aleksandr Vladimirovich.

[Rutskoy] I am listening.

[Voronin] First, today we introduced this question in accordance with the decision of the Soviet of the Republic and not the Presidium. Second, Aleksandr Vladimirovich, at the last meeting it was the first time that I had been present at your interdepartmental commission and you may recall that I made the proposal that all the material on the ports should be handed over to the procuracy.

Right, microphone number one, please.

[Andropov] Constituency no. 90, Deputy Andropov.

Esteemed Aleksandr Vladimirovich: Is it possible to draw the conclusion from everything that we have heard here that what is at the bottom of all this is the economic program being implemented by the president and the government in which the main thrust is that primary capital accumulation should be achieved by any means and that in this reform the government is simply grabbing its bit?

[Rutskoy] You know, it would be difficult and perhaps lacking in objectivity to say that that is really the case, but in my reply to Kravchenko, I explained why crime was growing and how it was linked with the economy. I think an economist of that level understood, anyway.

But as for the things I have spoken about here, then if you analyze this material, even this restricted amount of material—you must understand that time is limited and I could present many more examples and show many more documents—you come to the conclusion that in the state, in the system of executive power, the very concept of power is simply missing. That is, everything is permitted to oneself: I will do whatever I like; if I want to I will sign an instruction for 25 tonnes of gold, just like that. I had good reason to say that such a decision should surely have been examined at the Supreme Soviet, without a doubt, am I not right? Or 31 tonnes of gold, help yourself. Or emeralds there, help yourself; or oil there, help yourself. They cannot find a trace of 15 million tonnes of oil.

The system of power is absent. You may recall that Boris Nikolayevich [Yeltsin] said in his statement that what was needed was resolute actions, a vertical system of executive power.

That is all true, all of this is needed. But who destroyed this whole system? Who destroyed it? Not modernized, not improved, but destroyed this system? And who prevented resolute actions? It can be shown; documents even in this reading reveal elementary irresponsibility, and that is all.

[Voronin] Right. Esteemed members of the Supreme Soviet, 30 minutes have passed as we agreed.

[Unidentified deputies] Please stop. No, last one. There are a lot of people still standing there. We agreed. Esteemed colleagues, we agreed on 30 minutes.

[Voronin] I am putting it to a vote. Microphone number two next and let's finish on that. I would like to ask you to vote. [murmuring] Please, vote. I would like to ask you again to vote, then let the person at microphone number two ask the last question and let's end on that. Sit down, sit down. [video shows the voting board: 134 are in favor, 7 against]

The decision has been passed. Microphone two. Ask the last question, please.

[Isayev] Constituency no. 478, Chelyabinsk Oblast, Boris Isayev, a people's deputy and a member of the Supreme Soviet. Esteemed Aleksandr Vladimirovich: I have listened with great attention to the information that has been systematized—though information like that appeared a long time ago. Our mass media has always timidly spoken about these kind of issues. As a rule, the publications get printed but nobody pays attention to them. This has become an everyday event. I have been seriously concerned for a long time about a very painful issue. Lately there has been a large number of foreign specialists in our ministeries, departments, and in our governments—especially in the central economic ministries.

I have received information that 50 U.S. specialists who speak excellent Russian work in the State Committee for Property. Whose interests do they represent today in our country? And has your group not investigated this phenomenon? Thank you.

[Rutskoy] No, we have not investigated this phenomenon. Incidentally, yesterday I asked Anatoliy Borisovich's [Chubays, head of the State Committee for Property] deputy how many specialists work there. He said: well it depends on what issue. Sometimes 16 come, or 20, but they work temporarily. What are they working for? They are openly checking economic information which in a normal state is a state secret. But here they are active—they go where they want. You understand. They are checking economic information. That's it.

[Voronin] Thank you, Aleksandr Vladimirovich.

Stepankov on Law Enforcement Problems

LD1704131593 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1028 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Speech by Russian Procurator General Valentin Stepankov at a session of the Russian Supreme Soviet in Moscow—live]

[Text] Esteemed people's deputies! You have heard information from the Russian Federation vice president and the chairman of the interdepartmental commission. It must be noted that this is probably the first time we have talked openly and loudly about a particular type of legal infringement, about a particular type of crime that is forming and that aids the creation of conditions for the committing of serious economic crimes, including in the higher spheres and echelons of power. It must be noted that the instructions from executive officials mentioned and the government instructions mentioned lie outside the sphere of the procuracy's control. It was not for nothing that the Seventh Congress of People's Deputies discussed the question of extending the procuracy's control over the legality of government resolutions and instructions and extending the procuracy's control over this kind of legislative activity. However, this congress decision is still unimplemented, and the procuracy is deprived of the opportunity of implementing control over instructions and decisions, including those mentioned by the vice president in his speech. It must also be remembered that these power structures remain outside control, and it is because of this that in many instances we do not have the opportunity to receive information, analyze it, and adopt measures forestalling the implementation of any transaction that contradicts the state's interests.

Apart from this, it must be directly acknowledged that today as a whole in Russia the entire system of law and order is not orientated toward and is not in a condition to fight corruption and crime in the higher echelons of power. Today the small investigative body that is directed, first of all, toward general crimes—robberies, fights, hooliganism—and the procuracy's investigators are snowed under with cases of numerous murders, and because of this the whole range of activities mentioned in the report remain outside the field of the procuracy's control, and there is no possibility of conducting a serious, lengthy investigation that could be established as the basis for judicial decisions that should put the case in place. Apart from this, I think the law and order bodies are not only incapable of fighting against this effectively today, but unintentionally today their actions are aimed at destroying the existing weak branch of the judicial system and the weak branch of the law and order system. It is laid low at its roots.

For example, last year there was a reduction of 30 percent in applications and acceptances for law schools. Today, when we have a vast shortage of over 40,000 professional militia workers, when over 2,000 posts are unfilled, when one in ten procuracy officials' posts and one in four investigators' posts are unfilled, cutbacks are being made even in those law schools, which since time immemorial have always prepared top-class professionals for us.

Moreover, all sorts of reorganizations and often even copying of Western models are being introduced into the law-enforcement system and they are causing only greater harm. Instead of getting on with their everyday work and unmasking the criminal elements that have been spoken about here, attempts are being made to draw the procuracy into 100 percent support of state accusations, to use them not for unmasking the criminal but only for attending court, and eventually there will not be any cases in court at all and there will be nothing for the procurator to go there for.

Today the idea of jury trials is being foisted on us and they ask why the procurator general is opposed to jury trials. America has already allocated money for this experiment; everything has already been bought for this; so get a move on with introducing this jury trial system and let us develop a new model instead of getting on with our real job.

Moreover, today the country has in effect been deprived of its monitoring system, its system of well-grounded financial expertise, its system of scientific expert institutions in the sphere of court proceedings and in the sphere of investigation. Our expert investigation institutions have virtually withered away. They have turned into commercial structures, and today the investigators and the courts have been deprived of the opportunity of obtaining an effective conclusion.

The example of red mercury is quite indicative. The procuracy did not want to withdraw from investigating this, but it turned out that we had in our hands the official conclusion of academicians, we had in our hands the official conclusion of departments that such a raw material does not exist in nature—do not pull the wool over our eyes, do not busy yourself with something that should not exist at all. Those were the replies we received. It was only as a result of hard work and joint efforts including an interdepartmental commission that we received the documents that were distributed in a very narrow circle, which were secret and which were not sent to many addresses where they should have been.

Examples have been cited here in which the absence of these monitoring institutions today prevents us from conducting an investigation. Take the currency control inspectorate that has been mentioned here. This inspectorate was set up on paper. The person who headed it was stagnating without a telephone or an office. We invited him to the procuracy and said, well, we will bunch up a bit, sit down, there is a chair and telephone for you. He worked for a week, and as a result of that week they discovered one deal, a commercial structure that was illegally withholding money abroad, and 7 million dollars were transferred to Russia. After this the commission was immediately eliminated and this has been spoken about in detail already.

I think we should in any case also spell out something else here. When speaking about the ramified system of corruption and the abuse of power by authoritative bodies, we should continue to draw up adequate measures to combat this. Today I think we should not limit ourselves just to creating a certain investigation commission that is provisional or that exists for a limited time. In the end we will reach a situation when the investigation commission should be able to carry out an investigation and have procedural rights so the conclusions can be used a basis of a future court decision. It is impossible to create such a thing overnight.

What derives from this is that the existing system of law and order should be trusted and strengthened with all the necessary powers that already exist. Drafts of such legislative acts are already in the committee, and Mikhail Alekseyevich [Mityukov, chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet committee for legislation] also has them. They include forms of liability for refusing to give to the procurator the material that he is in need of, the need of giving an explanation for refusing to appear before the procuracy, and liability for exerting pressure on the procuracy bodies, investigators—the judges are already protected—cross-examiners, and so on; i.e, these are the instruments we are waiting for.

In practice there is talk about abolishing the independent procurator's inspectorate, of resubordinating the procuracy to either structures of executive powers, or something else. This leads to a situation when the last people who are devoted to their cause are leaving their work by thinking the state does not need their work and labor today and that the protection of the interests of the state is not popular at large. When such steps are undertaken, a huge campaign is unleashed to discredit such people, including brave judges and investigators who are trying to unmask corruption. That is why I think this issue touched upon here has already forced the Supreme Soviet to return to the large package of the Seventh Congress. The Seventh Congress has outlined the priority list of legislative acts that the Supreme Soviet is obliged to adopt. We have these legislative acts today, and we should return to them and arm our law and order bodies with the legal material that will enable them to combat these crimes.

In conclusion, I would like to point out numerous facts that have been brought up here and that are already known to the law and order bodies. On some of them a check up has begun and on others charges are being pressed against the parties of an illegal deal in order to return to the situation that existed before. These include numerous facts in the privatization of state property. Yet this work can be carried out to the end only with the visible support that the Supreme Soviet is able to render and if the efforts of all the law and order bodies are combined. This is precisely what the interdepartmental commission headed by the vice president is doing at present.

Use of Money During Referendum Noted

LD1604171193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1611 GMT 16 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Yuriy Filippov]

[Text] Moscow April 16 TASS—A resolution "on specific measures related to the April referendum campaign" was adopted by the parliament today to ban the campaign use of any sums of money, but those included in the estimate of spending on referendum preparations and holding.

State mass media bodies are instructed to give equal possibilities to various campaign participants, and state power bodies' officials can participate in the campaign "only in their free time and voice only their personal opinion".

The Russian Ministry of Justice and the Russian Procurator's Office are instructed to control the observation of legislation in preparations for the referendum and, as need be, enforce corresponding preventive punishment.

Resolution Provides Security for Rutskoy

LD1604161793 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1422 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Lyudmila Yermakova]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Apr—The Supreme Soviet has adopted a resolution on the drive against crime and corruption. It did so in response to statements delivered at today's session by Aleksandr Rutskoy, vice president and chairman of the Security Council's interdepartmental commission on crime and corruption, and by Valentin Stepankov, the procurator general.

The Parliament entrusted the commission set up by the Congress of People's Deputies to look into evidence of abuse and the Security Council's inter-departmental commission with jointly investigating the evidence of offenses contained in the vice president's report, and to send the papers to the Procuracy. It also instructed the commissions to report back to the Supreme Soviet in June. The staff of the inter-departmental commission are required to work with the special commission set up by Congress to investigate evidence of corruption and economic crimes committed in federal bodies of authority.

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet was also instructed to provide security for both Aleksandr Rutskoy and the staff of the Security's Council's commission on crime and to ensure the safe-keeping of documents.

Commentary on Rutskoy's 'Political Bomb'

LD1704075993 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1600 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Commentary by special correspondent Vyacheslav Osipov]

[Text] So another parliamentary week has come to an end. And the Constitutional Democrat Mikhail Astafyev, Christian Democrat Viktor Aksyuchits, and Communist Vladimir Isakov have joined hands and set off for the holidays again. Over the coming days, until 25 April, until the referendum, they will campaign and propagandize their views. They are all right, because other officials in the Russian Federation will not be able to do this. And why not? Because officials in the federal bodies of state power of the Russian Federation, bodies of state power of subjects of the Russian Federation, and bodies of local self-government have the right to engage in referendum campaigning only outside their working time, according to the Supreme Soviet resolution adopted on 16 April on measures relating to campaigning in the runup to the referendum.

Deputy Supreme Soviet Chairman Nikolay Ryabov described the aforementioned resolution as an interpretation of a number of articles in the Law on the Referendum. It was also mooted that the interpretation could be stretched to a ban on voicing one's personal opinion and not linking it with the fulfillment of one's official duties, but reason won out and these words were removed. Indeed, how can the minister of social welfare, for instance, maintain silence about the second question in the referendum, if this relates directly to her [Ella Pamfilova]?

Parliament never did finish discussing the resolution on the fulfillment of the state program of privatization in 1992. The Russian Federation people will doubtless voice their opinion on that when they vote on the second question in the referendum, on the social and economic policy of the president and the government.

But even today, 16 April, none other than a full-blooded member of the executive power, the president's right hand man, Aleksandr Rutskoy, started an offensive against the economic reforms, describing them as a "deliberate crime by the government against the people." Making use of the tribune of the Supreme Soviet, and subsequently getting the support of a section of the corps of deputies, the vice president delivered a report on crime and corruption in the top echelons of the executive power.

Following the latest statements by Boris Yeltsin, which were evidently not to his liking, Aleksandr Rutskoy exploded a bomb of political scandal in parliament. He took out of his briefcase a plump sheaf of papers, from which, as Aleksandr Vladimirovich [Rutskoy] declared, it follows that Shumeyko, Shokhin, Chubays, Grachev, Yerin, and other members of the Cabinet of Ministers should be prosecuted. The vice president called for a commission of enquiry to be set up immediately to investigate cases of corruption and abuse.

The Supreme Soviet at once responded, and such a commission will indeed get to work and check the facts cited by Rutskoy. True, Deputy Prime Minister Anatoliy Chubays, who was refused the floor, told journalists that much of Rutskoy's evidence is built upon lies and juggling with the facts, in particular, as regards privatization in Chelyabinsk, Nakhodka, and military property.

The political bomb dropped by pilot Rutskoy will either blow up the structure of the executive power, or the vice president will destroy himself as a politician. That was how the parliamentary week ended. And first thing on 26 April, all members of the Supreme Soviet have to be in parliament.

'Trade Tariff' Act Passed

LD1604112093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0932 GMT 16 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Yuriy Filippov]

[Text] Moscow April 16 TASS—The Russian parliament passed an act "on trade tariff" at the second reading today.

The act fixes a procedure to establish a customs tariff, defines the rules and imposition of customs duties on goods. The list of these products and rates of customs fees according to the provisions of the law are determined by the Russian Government.

The act defines a procedure for allocating easy-term tariffs, a list of which is drawn up by the Russian Federation Government. Items which are exempt from customs duty include Russian and other currencies, except for coin-collecting, goods imported and exported from Russia in the form of humanitarian aid and a number of other articles.

The act will be brought into force on July 1, 1993.

Fishing in Sea of Okhotsk Banned

OW1604184693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1726 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Russian parliament passed on April 16 an ordinance "On Measures For Protection Of Biological Resources of the Sea of Okhotsk and suspended, beginning on June 15, 1993, "the production of biological resources by Russian and foreign vessels in the central Sea of Okhotsk, pending the signing of an appropriate international agreement" because Russian and foreign fishermen are operating in a predatory manner, destroying valuable biological resources. This practice threatens to destroy the fish reserves that spawn in Russia's coastal waters and has grave social and economic consequences for the population in the coastal areas of the Far East.

The Supreme Soviet urged the Russian government to propose international talks with interested countries to develop a regime for the production of biological resources in the central part of the Sea of Okhotsk which is Russia's exclusive economic zone.

Parliament To Resume After Referendum

LD1604162493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1519 GMT 16 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Yuriy Filippov]

[Text] Moscow April 16 TASS—Russia's Supreme Soviet (standing legislature) adjourned its session until after April 26. Next week lawmakers are going to their electoral districts.

When closing today's meeting of the session, First Deputy Parliament Speaker Yuriy Voronin asked deputies to make sure that they will return to Moscow on the next day after the nationwide vote.

Proceedings From 15 Apr Session Reported

Law on Status of Moscow Adopted

LD1504213393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1539 GMT 15 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Yuri Filippov]

[Text] Moscow April 15 TASS—The Russian parliament on Thursday [15 April] adopted a law of the Russian federation "on the status of the capital of the Russian Federation." The draft was perfected for the third reading by the parliamentary committee for local government with the participation of a working group of the parliament.

The law defines Moscow's status and specifies mutual rights and obligations of federal and the capital's authorities. In accordance with the law, the city's expenditures involved in the discharge of functions of the Russian capital are compensated by subventions from the state budget in which they are represented by a separate line in roubles and hard currency.

Public functions in Moscow are regulated by separate article of the law under which they are not permitted in the territories adjoining the buildings in which the supreme legislative, executive and judiciary authorities of the Russian Federation are situated.

The law stipulates that the charter of Moscow adopted by the municipal council of deputies is coordinated with the president and parliament as regards Moscow's functions as the capital of the Russian Federation.

Abdulatipov Warns of 'Confrontation'

LD1504201893 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1700 GMT 15 Apr 93

[Report by correspondent Tatyana Komarova, from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] [Tatyana Komarova] Besides its work on lawcreation, the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation today also discussed problems relating to the referendum. Of the issues discussed at the session today, one should single out the ratification of the CIS Charter. [Video shows voting results display saying 177 for, 2 against, 12 abstentions, total votes 191. Motion passed] It was adopted in Minsk in January. Presenting the document, Anatoliy Adamishin, a deputy foreign minister, stressed that the CIS Charter met Russia's interests, and was an important tool for partnership on equal terms within CIS. A closer cooperation would no doubt contribute to reinforcing stability on the territory of the former USSR. The forthcoming referendum, on 25 April, is still at the center of attention.

[Ramazan Abdulatipov, chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities of the Supreme Soviet] The present situation in Russia shows that the referendum practically does not solve a single problem in the contradictions we have in Russia now, because the outcome of the referendum, the expression of people's will, has no space to stand on, be it in legal, moral, spiritual, or political terms. Without this, the referendum will be interpreted by each side according to its own wishes. This is what I proceed from: I was in Belgorod yesterday, and when asked who I would vote for, I said I would vote for Russia, for preserving the integrity of the Russian Federation. Because the referendum will pass, and Russia will remain. So in this aspect, the most important thing today is not to stir up confrontation in the run-up to the referendum. If we stir up confrontation, the split between the federal bodies of power now can spread into the masses. In that event, it would be very difficult to control this process, and we would virtually be on the verge of civil war.

Pensions Raised Through Indexation

LD1504220493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1841 GMT 15 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow April 15 TASS—The Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation has decided today to carry out 1.9 times indexation of minimum pensions.

From May 1 this year the minimum pensions, at present amounting to 4275 rubles, will be increased up to 8122 rubles, and the maximum pensions will exceed 20,000 rubles, a spokesman for the information service of the pension fund of Russia told ITAR-TASS.

In accordance with this decision, the pension fund of Russia will secure additionally about 600 billion rubles for 35 million Russian pensioners.

The indexation is being effected on the basis of the current Russian legislation and will be second over this year. The first pension increase was made from February 1, 1993.

Khasbulatov Threatens To Fire Fedorov

LD1504223793

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 2000 GMT on 15 April from the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet session carries highlights concerning the indexation of pensions.

First Deputy Finance Minister Sergey Konstantinovich Dubinin is shown discussing financing of the 1.9 times indexation of pensions which was approved by the Supreme Soviet earlier today. He points out the need for a change in the law as the legislation currently in force leads to a constant increase in the differentiation of the pensions and, moreover, places a constantly growing and purely inflationary burden on the budget.

Dubinin continues, noting that without the permission of the Russian Supreme Soviet the Russian Central Bank is refusing to conclude a credit agreement with the government on servicing government credits and on their redemption deadlines.

Russian Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov responds, stating: "Yes, and at the same time, you digressed, but you digressed very adroitly. Yesterday your finance minister announced that he is stopping the financing of the Armed Forces allegedly because the Supreme Soviet is not permitting this. If such gestures are to continue on the part of the finance minister we will at once relieve him of the duties of Minister of Finance. I ask you to take this seriously. What kind of jokes are these? What do you mean by them? The government is forbidding the Supreme Soviet to finance the Armed Forces? Have you gone mad? And at the same time, incidentally, through the Central Bank, you are getting at the Supreme Soviet! Don't take out your aggression on the Supreme Soviet."

Latvian Extradition Treaty Ratified

LD1604195793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1501 GMT 16 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Moscow April 16 TASS—The Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation issued the following statement on Friday:

"On April 15 the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation ratified the treaty on handing over convicted persons between the Russian Federation and the Latvian Republic. In addition, treaties on legal assistance signed by the Russian Federation with Latvia and Lithuania were submitted to the Russian Supreme Soviet for ratification.

As is known, Russian citizen Sergey Parfenov, accused of exceeding his official powers and convicted by a Latvian court, is serving a sentence in a prison in Riga.

The Russian president, the Supreme Soviet, the Foreign Ministry, other departments, public organisations and individual citizens of Russia have repeatedly addressed the Latvian side requesting it to hand Sergey Parfenov over to Russia. The leadership of the Latvian Republic, including chairman of the Latvian Supreme Soviet, Anatolijs Gorbunovs, expressed the readiness to resolve this issue positively after the end of the court proceedings and the creation of the appropriate legal mechanism.

The Russian side responded to the wishes and terms put forward by Riga. When there an enquiry appeared from the Lithuanian Prosecutor's Office on handing Sergey Parfenov to the Lithuanian side for investigation on other matters on the grounds that Lithuania brought an action against Sergey Parfenov, the Russian side gave assurances that in accordance with the signed agreements between our states on legal assistance, legal action may also be taken after handing Sergey Parfenov over to Russia.

In these conditions we have the right to expect the Latvian side to immediately implement the agreement on handing Sergey Parfenov over to Russia to serve a sentence there."

Abdulatipov Views North Caucasus Situation

LD1604012393 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1245 GMT 15 Apr 93

[Itar-Tass parliamentary correspondent Lyudmila Yermakova]

[Text] Moscow, 15 Apr (ITAR-TASS)—Thanks to the Coordination Council of North Caucasus it had proved possible to "make centripetal tendencies in North Caucasus more active," Ramazan Abdulatipov, chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, said today opening a session of the council in the Russian House of Soviets in Moscow. The participants in the meeting plan to have a roundtable discussion of the state of law, order, and legality in the region and measures to improve the situation, and of the solution to the refugees' problem, and to listen to a report by the association for social-economic cooperation between the republics, krays and oblasts in North Caucasus.

More active and coordinated actions by federal power bodies are becoming the main factor in stabilizing the situation in the region, Ramazan Abdulatipov said. An end should be put to "the period of flirting continually with various forces, inter alia anti-Russian ones; activity should be orientated toward power structures, soviets, and heads of administration which currently function on a constitutional basis." At the same time ways toward dialogue and mutual understanding should be sought. The process is currently under way to eliminate the former policy of Moscow prompting how provinces should resolve their problems, what territory should belong to which province, and what provinces should be subordinate. Ramazan Abdulatipov expressed the opinion that these issues can be resolved only by reaching accord and understanding locally. Federal authorities are only required to support politically, economically, and legally the measures implemented in the region.

Regional Affairs

Dudayev Dissolves Chechen Parliament, Introduces Presidential Rule

OW1704170093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1656 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Saturday [16 April], Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev signed the decrees on the dissolvement of the parliament and government and on the introduction of the presidential rule in the republic and of curfew in Groznyy from 24:00 until 500 [as received], Chechen Deputy Foreign Minister Said Geliskhanov informed Interfax on Saturday. The decree says that pending the expiration of their powers, the deputies will retain their privileges and salaries.

Dudayev also appointed Zelikhman Yanderbiyev, the chairman of the parliamentary committee for the media, to the post of Chechnya's vice president. Vice Premier Mairbek Mugadayev has been instructed to form a new cabinet and, before May 15, to present a program for overcoming the economic crisis.

Addressing his compatriots on TV, Dudayev said that the demonstrators who had been holding a meting in the central square of Groznyy did not understand that they were being used in Russia's political game with Chechnya.

The meeting was organized by the Chechen trade unions in support of the economic demands. However, eventually participants began to chant political slogans and to call for the dissolvement of the parliament and government, and for the resignation of Dzhokhar Dudayev.

The Chechen president believes that the political manifestations were held on the initiative of the Russian parliament's deputies representing former Chechnya, including parliament speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov.

According to sources in Groznyy, in the morning Dudayev's supporters held a meeting in the central square in solidarity with him. The number of demonstrators ranges from 30,000 to 50,000.

On April 17, the opposition is holding a meeting of its own in Theater Square where about 5,000 people demand early elections of all of the Chechen authoritative bodies.

Chechen sources allege, meanwhile, that a train with Russian border guards, withdrawn from Azerbaijan, passed through the Gudermes station in the north of Chechnya. The Chechen side did not give the permit for the transit of the Russian military train. The Chechen official quarters believe that this fact may cause yet another aggravation of relations with Moscow.

Parliament Terms Presidential Rule 'Illegal'

LD1704192293 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Excerpts] Today, the [Chechen] President decided to abolish parliament. The latter responded in kind. All this happened in Groznyy, the capital of Chechnya. President Dzhokhar Dudayev demanded the resignation of the Cabinet, the dissolution of Parliament, and the introduction of direct presidential rule. A curfew has been imposed on Groznyy.

President Dudayev's statement was made at a rally attended, according to various estimates, by 30-50,000 people. An opposition rally, though less populous, was held in the Chechen capital simultaneously. [passage omitted]

Here is what our Groznyy correspondent Ruslan Nashkhoyev said over the telephone this evening.

[Nashkhoyev] At 1900 Moscow time, Parliament began an emergency sitting. Before it started, Khusayn Akhmadov, chairman of Parliament, told a Radio Russia correspondent that all President Dudayev's decrees, apart from the one on the dismissal of the Government—which incidentally had been approved by Parliament yesterday—are illegal under the Constitution. The parliamentary chairman also said that order would be introduced in the republic. He expressed friendly feelings toward the people of Russia, and also his confidence that talks with the Russian Federation would continue shortly, and that a bilateral treaty will be signed.

Parliament Begins Impeachment Against Dudayev

OW1804144093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1404 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Chechnya's parliament began the process of impeaching President Dzhokhar Dudayev in connection with "his attempt to stage a coup", the parliament leader, Khusayn Akhmadov, told Interfax on Sunday. According to him, the appropriate parliamentary resolution has already been submitted to the Constitutional Court. When the Court takes its decision, the deputies will vote "for the impeachment of the president", Akhmadov stressed.

On Saturday [17 April] President Dudayev issued decrees to dissolve the parliament and government, and to impose direct presidential rule.

At its Sunday's session the parliament cancelled the president's decrees, except the one that provides for the dissolution of the cabinet of ministers. According to the parliament's chairman, that decree conforms to the parliamentary resolution on no confidence in the government adopted on April 14.

Akhmadov described the situation in Chechnya as "stable". "No acute confrontation is in evidence", he stressed.

According to Akhmadov, Sunday evening the MPs will convene for a session once again to make a number of amendments to the republic's Constitution and "consider the possibility of depriving 7 or 8 deputies of their powers". The wording suggested for this says that they were "accomplices in staging a coup". Akhmadov qualified the stand taken by the deputies in question as "running counter to the interests of the people and parliament of Chechnya".

In the meantime participants in the rally, which is going on in Chechnya's capital in support of the Constitution and the parliament, continue to demand that President Dudayev step down without delay. Some of them proclaimed their intention to remain in the square till their demand concerning the president's resignation is met.

According to estimates, participants in the meeting number between one and a half and 3 thousand people.

Court Terms Dudayev's Decrees 'Anticonstitutional'

OW1904104793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1024 GMT 19 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Chechen Republic's Constitutional Court has qualified as anticonstitutional President Dudayev's recent decrees on the dissolution of parliament, on the introduction of the presidential rule and on several appointments to the top posts, including that of vice-president.

On Sunday [18 April], parliament annulled these decrees with the exception of the one dealing with the dissolvement of the Cabinet of Ministers. The presidential decree on the dissolution of the government corresponded to the parliament's resolution on no-confidence to the Cabinet, passed on April 14, according to speaker Khusayn Akhmadov. On the same day parliament made a constitutional amendment depriving the president of his powers as Cabinet leader.

On Sunday the Chechen parliament began impeachment proceedings passing a corresponding appeal to the Constitutional Court. Khusayn Akhmadov told INTERFAX that if the Constitutional Court supported this initiative the deputies would vote for the president's impeachment.

Opposition Leader Calls Dudayev's Actions 'Coup'

OW1804143293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1344 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A coup was carried out in Chechnya, a leading member of the opposition, the co-chairman of the Round Table bloc of democratic forces, Zhabrail Gakayev, told Interfax on Saturday. According to him, President Dzhokhar Dudayev's decrees "are strikingly unconstitutional".

The president had ordered to dissolve Chechnya's parliament and government, and imposed presidential rule and a curfew in Chechnya's capital, Groznyy.

The president, Gakayev stressed, "has no right to dissolve the parliament or the cabinet of ministers; neither has he the right to appoint ministers or vice presidents. He actually declared a civil war with his actions". According to Gakayev, the people have no choice. "We'll rise to defend Chechnya's democracy, sovereignty and independence, and oppose the undemocratic regime," he said.

Supporters of the opposition continued their meeting in Groznyy Saturday evening. People decided not to disperse, despite the curfew imposed by the president, said Gakayev. Militia units are being formed to protect demonstrators, if there are attempts to disperse them, he said. According to him, the city assembly refused to comply with the president's decrees, and promised to send municipal police to protect participants in the meeting.

Groznyy Situation Updated; Calm in Ingushetia

LD1804102893 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0846 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Igor Serebryakov]

[Text] We have been trying to get in touch with Chechnya all morning to find out how the situation is developing there. Unfortunately there are no phone links with Groznyy. Republican radio is broadcasting marches instead of information bulletins. But our correspondent managed to get hold of Magomed Archakov, the president of Ingushetia's press secretary. He said that CHECHEN- PRESS information has been distributed in Nazran. As we know, Dzhokhar Dudayev, president of Chechnya, announced at a 30,000- strong rally on Saturday evening that he had signed decrees on the dissolution of parliament and the government and the formation of a new cabinet, on the appointment of Zelikhman Yandarbiyev, leader of the Vaynakh Democratic Party, as vice president, on the reappointment of Elza Sharipova as procurator general, and on the introduction of a curfew in Groznyy from midnight to 0500. At the same time an opposition rally began in Groznyy's Theater Square, where about 5,000 people gathered. Magomed Archakov said that Ingushetia had reacted calmly to events in the neighboring sovereign republic.

Just before going on air I was given some information from our Stavropol correspondent. He has been lucky. He managed to get in touch with the Chechnya Cabinet of Ministers. The first night of the curfew declared in Groznyy passed peacefully, without any excesses. A rally called by those opposing the actions of the president is now continuing in Theater Square. It has become known that the republic's parliament, dissolved by order of Dudayev, decided at an extraordinary sitting to restrict itself to legal actions to reestablish the legitimate government in the republic, and has appealed to the Constitutional Court.

Groznyy Reported Calm Under Presidential Rule

OW1804141193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1343 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Reports from Groznyy, capital of the Chechen republic, say the National Congress of the Chechen People has ended a full session in the city by approving a resolution to call a three-day national conference on April 23 which its organisers say is expected to express confidence in President Dzhokhar Dudayev and his policy. The National Congress is a working public group led Dudayev himself.

A senior foreign ministry official in Groznyy meanwhile said the situation in the city remained calm following Dudayev's introduction of presidential rule on Saturday and that there was "no explicit response from the opposition".

Nonetheless, observers do not rule [out] retaliation by the republican parliament which is opposed to President Dudayev. Chechen Deputy Magomed Gushkayev challenged "the legality" of Dudayev's decrees on dissolving the parliament and sacking the government. He believes the measure is unconstitutional.

Rally in Groznyy Demands Dudayev's Resignation

LD1504205993 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1800 GMT 15 Apr 93

[Text] In the Chechen Republic the course of events is speeding up. As our correspondent Ruslan Nashkoyev has reported from Groznyy, following calls by the trade unions of the Chechen Republic an all-republican rally, the largest and the first sanctioned rally this year, began at 1100 [0700 GMT] on 15 April in front of the building of the Council of Ministers and the parliament of the Chechen Republic on Svoboda Square. Workers of education, culture, medicine, and of various enterprises and organizations participated. The working people demanded that the current leadership of the republic should clear off an astronomical debt on wages, grants, and allowances.

The trade union's address notes that the process of the impoverishment of the people has developed into the process of the dying out of the republic which shows itself in the economy, science, public education, medicine, and other fields. The trade unions said that the credit of confidence in President Dudayev, the Cabinet of Ministers, and parliament had been exhausted.

By 1400 on Thursday the number of participants in the Groznyy rally reached 70-80,000 people. As a result of voting the decision was made that President Dudayev, the entire Cabinet of Ministers, and parliament should resign, as well as the republic's Council of the Elders and the management of Chechen television.

Rally Continues; Demands Noted

LD1804122093 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1000 GMT 18 Apr 93

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Our Chechen correspondent Ramzan Khadzhiyev has reported that a nationwide rally is continuing in Groznyy for the fourth day running. Participants are demanding the full resignation of all power structures and new elections on a democratic basis. Yesterday's decrees by Dzhokhar Dudayev dissolving the parliament and cabinet of ministers and introducing direct presidential rule have brought the situation, which was complicated anyway, to the boiling point.

The Constitutional Court of the Chechen Republic has been in session since this morning. It is considering these decrees to decide whether they are in accordance with the Constitution of Chechnya. The situation in the republic remains tense.

[Khadzhayev] The disintegration of the economy, increasing crime, and a political, economic, and legal arbitrariness—these are characteristic features of today's life in the Chechen Republic. Among the economic demands put forward at the rally today are the immediate settlement of debts on paying wages, an end to the chaos called privatization, and the transformation of industrial facilities into joint-stock companies, ignoring such industries of the national economy as local industry, agriculture, culture, etc. The social sphere of life in the republic today is in total decline.

There are also political demands. Unconditionally supporting in principle the policy toward sovereighty undertaken by the president, participants in the rally are demanding the immediate resignation of his entourage which, in their opinion, is to blame for corruption and all improper deeds.

Khasbulatov Visits Tikhvin, Warns Against Congress's Dissolution

OW1704170793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1657 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Minsk summit on April 16 was "absolutely empty", the Russian parliament speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov told the public in the town of Tikhvin in the St. Petersburg region. He also said that the Minsk summit, like the talks in Vancouver, had been organized to help Yeltsin secure personal support.

Khasbulatov noted that if the congress of people's deputies were eliminated, Russia would have a dictatorial constitution in a liberal wrapping which would turn Russia into a source of raw materials for the industrialized states. He also said that even in the communist times, the executive authorities did not venture such cynicism.

To quote Khasbulatov, the representative authority had lost its strength and had been virtually conquered by the executive authority which was creating a solid foundation for crime.

Speaking about the referendum, he emphasized that the answers, negative or positive, would lead to nothing. "Let us see if the president will fulfill his promise to resign if he is not supported during the referendum," said Khasbulatov.

He described as "dangerous" Yeltsin's statement to the effect that the economic situation is improving and that the crisis has been overcome. The crisis is becoming even more serious, so the best thing to do would be to recognize during the referendum that the president and his government have not coped with their work, said Khasbulatov.

Says CIS Summit 'Unproductive'

LD1704194793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1928 GMT 17 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Irina Zolotareva]

[Text] St. Petersburg April 17 TASS—Russian Parliament Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov described the recent CIS summit in Minsk as "absolutely unproductive".

Winding up his visit to St. Petersburg today, Khasbulatov gave a live interview to the television and radio broadcasting company Petersburg - Fifth Channel.

He emphasised that the Minsk meeting boiled down to "the heads of state discussing our internal matters. But this already becomes a norm when our president goes abroad and discusses with other leaders our internal matters rather than international relations or our state's interests in the sphere of world politics."

At the same time, in his view, the CIS peoples "have the desire to move away from artificial obstacles." He believes that Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan can draw together more rapidly and the idea of a "tripartite" economic and defence union may well ripen with them.

These three states could become a nucleus to which not only other CIS countries but even East European states would eventually gradually join them, Khasbulatov said.

On the forthcoming referendum, Khasbulatov recalled that he proposed holding a more direct poll when voters come to the ballot box and directly choose power rather than some idea.

In addition, the speaker is absolutely convinced that if the fifth issue - on confidence in each deputy - was put to the referendum, 99 per cent of his electors would vote for him today, because all polls of the population held in Groznyy show that Khasbulatov not simply leads but even leaves far behind General Dudayev. He does not doubt that the greater part of the parliament's deputies would receive voter confidence once again.

The present political upheavals are caused by the Russian president's exceptionally unwieldy actions, Khasbulatov believes.

Proposes Trilateral Union To Unify Commonwealth

OW1804145693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1342 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Russian Parliament Speaker, Ruslan Khasbulatov, believes that the practicable basis for unifying CIS members would be "a trilateral union between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan", which could subsequently be joined by other CIS members and probably by some East European countries.

"I was against a referendum," Khasbulatov said in an interview with St. Petersburg's television on Saturday. "We have committed numerous mistakes together, since we were elected in the former USSR." According to him, "the president and the people's deputies used their power inefficiently". Therefore the parliament speaker believes that it would have been better to invite the people to "elect other authorities", not play "referendum games".

Khasbulatov positively assessed the Congress of People's Deputies, which, he said, had introduced the presidency, elected Boris Yeltsin president, made "the most democratic amendments to the Constitution", and endorsed the principles of private property. "Thanks to the congress of deputies we have a united Russia," said Khasbulatov. According to him, deputies are willing to cooperate with executive authorities "on the road of adopting a new Constitution".

Nevertheless the speaker views the idea of two-house parliament as faulty. However the situation must be changed gradually, he said, "without inciting fears, without threatening to disband people". "Officials resorting to such threats place themselves beyond the Constitution," he pointed out. "The deputies are strong enough to force any official to act in the framework of the Constitution."

Threatens To Revoke Whatever Yeltsin Signs

LD1704212993 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1900 GMT 17 Apr 93

["Vesti" newscast video report by correspondent M. Lillelyali on visit by Russian Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov to Tikhvin on 17 April]

[Excerpts] [Lillelyali] Very early this morning, Ruslan Khasbulatov flew from St. Petersburg to the town of Tikhvin in Leningrad Oblast. [passage omitted]

After lunch, the Supreme Soviet chairman met the Tikhvin public. Here he once again reaffirmed his devotion to the Constitution. It is wrong to raise the question of abolishing the institution of presidency, Khasbulatov said. This would not lead to strengthening state power. The thing to do is just to review the president's powers, because the president keeps threatening: I will sign this, I will not sign that. All right, let him sign whatever he wants—and then we shall revoke it, the speaker sneered.

And what is that new constitution that no one has read? It is a dictatorial constitution in a liberal wrapping. That is what we will all get, Ruslan Khasbulatov concluded.

Says 'Nothing Catastrophic' if Yeltsin, Deputies Resign

LD1704193093 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1700 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Text] Russian Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov visited the city of Tikhvin in Leningrad Oblast today. There he met with representatives of the public and with people's deputies of Leningrad Oblast. Speaking about the forthcoming referendum, Khasbulatov stressed that it would not be the end of the world and nothing catastrophic would happen even if the president and people's deputies resigned. Refuting the Russian president's claim that the economic situation is improving, Khasbulatov said that neither the president nor the government are coping with their functions.

To Visit Voronezh Region

LD1604201393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1530 GMT 16 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Lyudmila Yermakova]

[Text] Moscow April 16 TASS—Russian Parliament Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov will travel to the black-earth region of Voronezh 500 kilometers south of Moscow. Khasbulatov will meet with the heads of industrial enterprises and research centres and talks with workers in the agro-industrial complex, farmers and people's deputies.

Khasbulatov is also scheduled to take part in the meeting of the Chairmen of the Supreme Soviets (legislatures) of the republics within the Russian Federation and Territorial and Regional Councils of People's Deputies.

Yeltsin Visits Vladimir To Celebrate Easter

LD1804114293 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1114 GMT 18 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Eduard Vasilyev]

[Text] Vladimir, 18 Apr—Russian President Boris Yeltsin arrived today in the ancient Russian town of Vladimir [approximately 200 km northeast of Moscow]. He has arrived here on an unofficial visit to mark the celebrations of the Joyous Festival of Orthodox Easter at the invitation of Yuriy Vlasov, the oblast governor.

The president met with the inhabitants of Vladimir at the Golden Gates, a monument of ancient Russian architecture.

Addresses People

LD1804173793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1726 GMT 18 Apr 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Vladimir April 18 TASS—Russian President Boris Yeltsin said that on the day of the referendum, April 25, when the future form of rule in Russia is decided, he wants people of Vladimir to remember that "Russia should be saved, that it should not slump into communist void". Yeltsin arrived in this olden Russian city some 200 kilometres north-east of Moscow for an unofficial visit on Sunday for Easter celebrations.

The president spoke to people of Vladimir in the square near the golden gates that were built in the 12th century. The square was filled with people. Archbishop Eulogiy of Vladimir and Suzdal served the liturgy. The president and persons accompanying him participated in the Easter procession from the Golden Gates to the Assumption Cathedral.

On the porch of the cathedral, Archbishop Eulogiy remarked that the number of Orthodox churches in the olden land of Vladimir and Suzdal trebled over the past two years. Their number reached almost 150. Monasteries, seminaries and Sunday schools were restored. "Every opportunity has been open to the benefit of the soul of Orthodox Christians. Believers are grateful for this miracle of life to our President Boris Yeltsin, and the forthcoming referendum will show this", he said.

In his speech made near the walls of the Assumption Cathedral Yeltsin remarked, specifically, that on Sunday, luckily, "not a single red flag was in evidence" which shows that the situation in Vladimir is stable and good.

The president thanked people of Vladimir for the support given to him during the elections in 1991. He said that Vladimir rated among the highest for the number of votes in his favour.

"I dream that Russia should revive. But I want Russia to remember traditions of the past centuries. I want it to restore truly Russian traditions, also religious traditions", the president said.

President Yeltsin returned from Vladimir to Moscow on Sunday.

Visit Seen as Yeltsin's 'Strongest Move'

LD1804204293 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1900 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Video report from Vladimir by correspondent V. Privezentsev, including recording of conversation between President Boris Yeltsin and an unidentified old man—from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] [Announcer] Although on [Orthodox] Easter Day [18 April] political passions have calmed down a bit, the referendum campaign is carrying on, though the president asked not to regard his visit to Vladimir today as part of this campaign.

[Privezentsev] The Russian president's visit to Vladimir lasted one day. He asked that there should be no meetings, whether at enterprises or with parties, and that it should not at all be linked with the forthcoming referendum. After all, the president is entitled to use his rightful day off as he sees fit. So why not go to Vladimir then? Incidentally, he had received several invitations to visit the town from the youngest governor in Russia, Yuriy Vlasov. Why should not the president celebrate Easter, the most respected Orthodox holiday, in the old capital of Rus, attending a morning service in a cathedral dating back to the 12th century, and paying a visit to Suzdal? All this did happen; however, he could not pass by Vladimir residents—a welcome at the Golden Gate, where the Vladimir public were waiting for him, a rally at the walls of the Cathedral of the Assumption.

[Old man, facing Yeltsin, in a church] Dark forces of the past are still around. They would like to enslave the Russian people again.

[Yeltsin] Yes, and to take them back again ...

[Old man, interrupting] And to take them back again to where they used to be. You know, I hear people say: Why, what has Yeltsin achieved? [I say] Yeltsin has given us freedom!

[Yeltsin] Thank you.

[Old man] Russia has obtained freedom for the first time!

[Yeltsin] Thank you. Thank you.

[Old man] From you personally!

[Yeltsin] No one can sell freedom.

[Privezentsev] From the point of view of a journalist, this unofficial visit has been the president's strongest move in his whole touring campaign in the run-up to the referendum. It has shown the undecided that the president himself is not devoid of patriotic feelings on which his opponents pride themselves so much.